

**DATE:** August 11, 2017

**STATE:** Texas

**BRIEFING FOR THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

**PREPARED BY:** Debra Bills, Project Leader, Ecological Services Field Office, Arlington, Texas

**SUBJECT:** Service Commitments for Black-Capped Vireo Post-delisting Monitoring Plan Implementation

**PURPOSE OF BRIEFING DOCUMENT:** To request confirmation of continued Black-capped vireo management on Wichita Mountains and Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuges, after the species is delisted.

**ISSUES:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) proposed to delist the Black-capped vireo due to recovery on December 15, 2016.

The Black-capped vireo's recovery is due largely to reducing and managing threats, mainly vegetation management and brown-headed cowbird parasitism. Continued management is required to ensure long term persistence of populations within some portions of the breeding range.

The Arlington Ecological Services Field Office (ESFO) developed a draft Post-delisting Monitoring (PDM) plan in cooperation with staff from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC), Fort Hood, Fort Sill, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Ongoing management includes population monitoring and cowbird control.

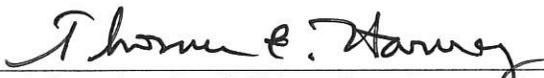
The Arlington ESFO is currently working with ODWC, TPWD, TNC, and the U.S. Army to establish commitments for continued vireo management. A similar commitment from the two National Wildlife Refuges for continued Black-capped vireo management for the 12-year monitoring period will support the goals of ensuring the species will continue to prosper on those lands.

**MAIN DECISION OR MESSAGE:** We request National Wildlife Refuge leadership's concurrence with implementation of the PDM plan on Balcones Canyonlands and Wichita Mountains and to manage habitats on those National Wildlife Refuge lands for the continuing benefit of the Black-capped vireo. We also invite Migratory Bird Division to share in these goals.

**BUREAU PERSPECTIVE:** The Black-capped vireo is an Endangered Species Act (Act) success story. Effective management and survey techniques, coupled with reduced threat sources, indicate protection under the Act is no longer necessary. This confirms the FWS' commitment to ongoing Black-capped vireo monitoring and management on Refuge lands after the species is delisted.

**CONTACT:** Ted Koch, Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, at 505-248-6671.

**APPROVED BY:**  **DATE:** 8/17/17  
Assistant Regional Director-Ecological Services

**APPROVED BY:**  **DATE:** 8/17/17  
Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System, Region 2

**APPROVED BY:**  **DATE:** 8/18/17  
Chief, Division of Migratory Birds, Region 2