



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 DESERT TORTOISE RECOVERY OFFICE
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PROGRESS REPORT
January through March 2008

ACTIVITY	GOALS	PROGRESS/STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Recovery Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Recovery Plan (details can be found on the DTRO website) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft plan is currently in Regional office for final edits prior to release for public comment through Federal Register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish notice of availability in Federal Register 60-day public comment Publish final revised plan Establish regional Recovery Implementation Teams
Science Advisory Committee (SAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with recovery plan revision process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold, pending release of draft revised recovery plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up subsequent to regional review
Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group (MOG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective coordination of agency planning and management activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold, pending release of draft revised recovery plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next meeting TBD Circulate charter for agency signatures
Range-wide Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting on 2007 surveys Develop study plan to guide monitoring program Secure long-term funding agreements for the monitoring program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft 2007 monitoring results have been presented and received by DTRO. Final analysis and report is being written for circulation by end of May 2008. Continued development of monitoring plan and associated SOPs, including field methods, training, and data handling draft sections using written materials developed and implemented in 2008 Contract established with USGS-Patuxent for retrospective analysis of occupancy Currently negotiating annual funding agreement for eastern part of range; low funding levels for western part had noticeable impact on planning and implementing improvements to monitoring program in 2008. FEB 28: Quarterly report on monitoring program at meeting of funding entities for western part of the range (Desert Managers Group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete annual report on monitoring results Initiate long-term monitoring plan elements to draft in 2008: data analysis and reporting requirements, administration and implementation procedures Continue to seek secure funding from DMG agencies and other sources

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Recovery Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish master database for all desert tortoise data • Develop protocols for structure, access, and maintenance of database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTRO continued to coordinate with Redlands Institute staff and others to develop a recovery decision support system as part of the recovery planning process and which will be integrated with or be a part of the recovery database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet with relevant parties to identify roles in database development • Work with regional agency teams to update database of threats/recovery actions • Integrate database with website
Recovery Permit Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead recovery permit review, in coordination with Region 8 and field offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One new recovery permit was issued and two renewed, resulting in a total of 14 active permits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center (DTCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the DTCC as an integrated part of the recovery program • Work with partners to ensure proper care of tortoises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTRO initiated conversations with the Conservation Centers for Species Survival (“C2S2” – a group of 5 zoological institutions) • Work continues under an agreement between Clark County and FWS for the care of tortoises brought to the DTCC as part of the MSHCP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and review C2S2’s recommendations on immediate and long-term improvements to the facility • Meet with C2S2 in May to discuss potential direct involvement beyond providing list of recommendations
Technical support and guidance for decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop information syntheses, guidance and protocols, and apply Service and partner programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translocation recommendations • Survey protocols • Renewable energy issue paper and siting/mitigation guidance • Recovery crediting program development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are in the development phase

Other Activities

- The DTRO continued to coordinate with the Ft. Irwin Conservation/Mitigation Working Group (CMWG) and research cooperators on desert tortoise translocation prior to expansion of the National Training Center. Coordination with and among research teams continued through initiation of the translocation, beginning in late March 2008.
- The DTRO continued participating in the California Desert Managers Group quarterly meetings. The DTRO also participates in and provides technical input to the Information and Education Workgroup and the newly created Conservation Land Acquisition Workgroup.
- DTRO continued participating in planning efforts for several upcoming small translocations in southern Nevada and Arizona.
- The DTRO together with the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office will facilitate implementation of the raven management program. Under the recently completed environmental assessment (March 2008), raven management will focus on areas within the California Desert using lethal and nonlethal methods.
- The DTRO continues to coordinate with and provide technical support to the FWS Ecological Services field offices on various issues.