



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 DESERT TORTOISE RECOVERY OFFICE
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PROGRESS REPORT
October through December 2005

| ACTIVITY | GOALS | PROGRESS/STATUS | NEXT STEPS |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| Range-wide Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct data analysis and report on monitoring conducted to date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA/QC of 2004 data complete QA/QC of 2001-3, 2005 data in progress Monitoring Implementation Committee (MIC) established timeline for 2001-05 summary report Monitoring efforts will focus on 5-year review of program, rather than additional field surveys in 2006 A Monitoring Coordinator position will be created to oversee all aspects of the monitoring program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End JAN: draft summary report of density results (less conclusions & recommendations) JAN 27: MIC meeting to draft conclusions & recommendations Winter/Spring 2006: managers' forum to discuss monitoring results and direction of the program Expand MIC to include managers Hire Monitoring Coordinator Additional analyses and program review during 2006 |
| Data Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop MOU between DOD MDEP, Redlands University, & UNR to establish master database for all desert tortoise data Develop protocols for structure, access, and maintenance of database | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOU has been delayed while database planning continues among the partners. Primary database needs have been identified by Service field offices, and an outline of the various components envisioned has been produced New Desert Tortoise Monitoring Coordinator will oversee data management program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue refining database concept Meet with relevant parties to identify roles in database development Finalize MOU |
| Science Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with recovery plan revision process Revise or develop new recovery criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEC 9-10: further refined recovery objectives and criteria; continued developing threat assessment process; identified additional research needs, met with representatives from the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR) for an overview of the stakeholder assessment and collaborative recovery planning process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JAN 20-21: meeting in Tucson MAR 16-17: meeting in Tucson Continue developing recovery objectives and criteria; refine threat analysis process; identify research needs and recovery actions; integrate with regional working groups |

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| <p>Recovery Planning</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Recovery Planning and Implementation Working Groups • Revise/amend Recovery Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement developed with USIECR to assess the feasibility of a collaborative recovery planning effort that would maximize stakeholder participation, with third-party neutral oversight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAN: Interview, select, and contract with third-party neutral contractor • FEB-APR: USIECR complete stakeholder assessment interviews • MAY: Conduct Stakeholder Assessment Public Workshops • MAY: Decision to proceed with collaborative Regional Working Group process |
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Other Activities

- The DTRO continues to participate on the Ft. Irwin Conservation/Mitigation Working Group and has assumed Service lead in coordinating the desert tortoise translocation prior to expansion of the National Training Center. Recommendations from the SAC have been incorporated into a draft RFP for translocation research.
- The DTRO continues working with partners, including Clark County, in evaluating new roles and objectives for the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center (DTCC), to better integrate regional land management and desert tortoise research and recovery objectives, especially with regard to management of tortoises cleared from development and the best use of those tortoises for research and recovery purposes. A proposal has been submitted for Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act funding to support architectural designs of new facilities for the DTCC. The DTRO is also coordinating on the development of a Master Plan for the DTCC.
- The DTRO has been coordinating with contractors, university and government scientists, and project proponents on the Coyote Springs Investment development in Clark and Lincoln counties, Nevada, to identify appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, including potential research, for the project. Similar efforts have also begun for a separate HCP in Lincoln County.
- The DTRO has participated on the Clark County Technical Advisory Group in providing technical review of conservation management strategies for four Desert Wildlife Management Areas in the county. To date, documents listing knowledge gaps pertinent to the species and individual regions have been reviewed. Draft strategies are expected in the upcoming quarter. These strategies will play an important part in the development of regional recovery action plans, discussed above.
- The DTRO has assumed lead in recovery permit review, in coordination with the regional office and field offices. Significant review and coordination during the current quarter include those in conjunction with the Ft. Irwin translocation project, in preparation for field activities this fall. Reviews of various other permits, range-wide, have also been conducted.

- The DTRO participates in the DMG Desert Tortoise Information and Education Project, focused on building public and stakeholder awareness of tortoise issues and tortoise recovery. Implementation of the 3-year project began in January 2005.