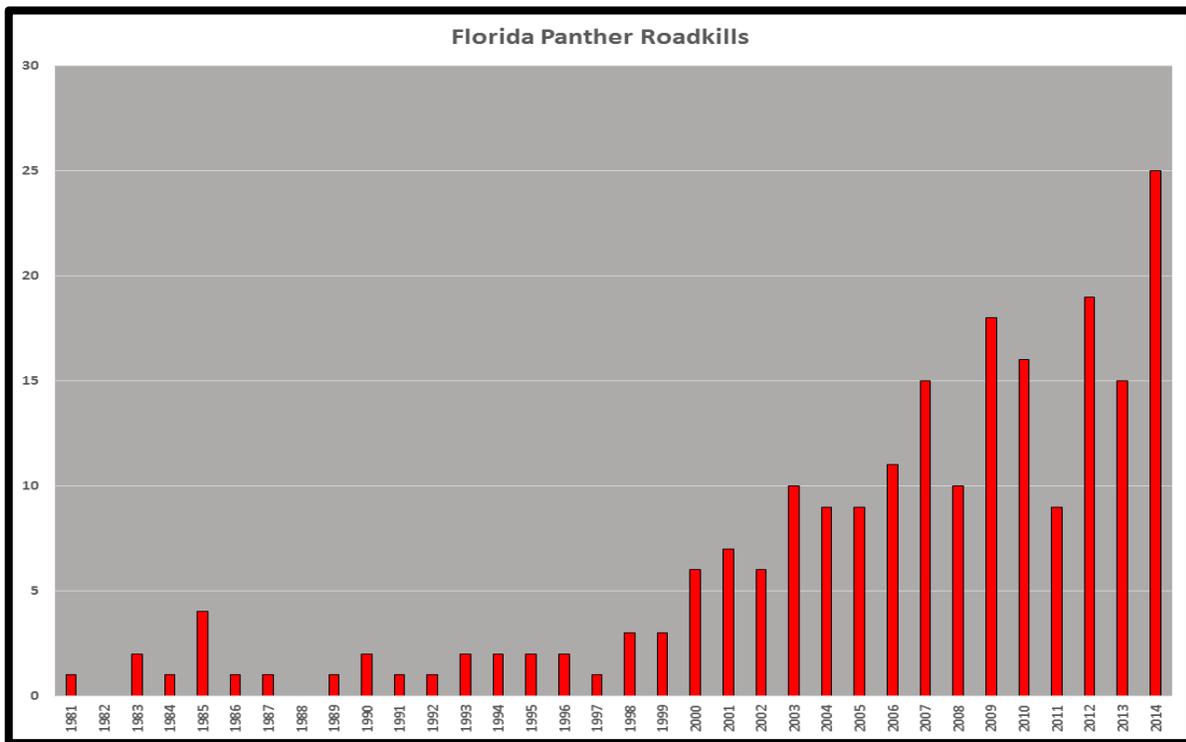


Florida Panther Recovery Implementation Team

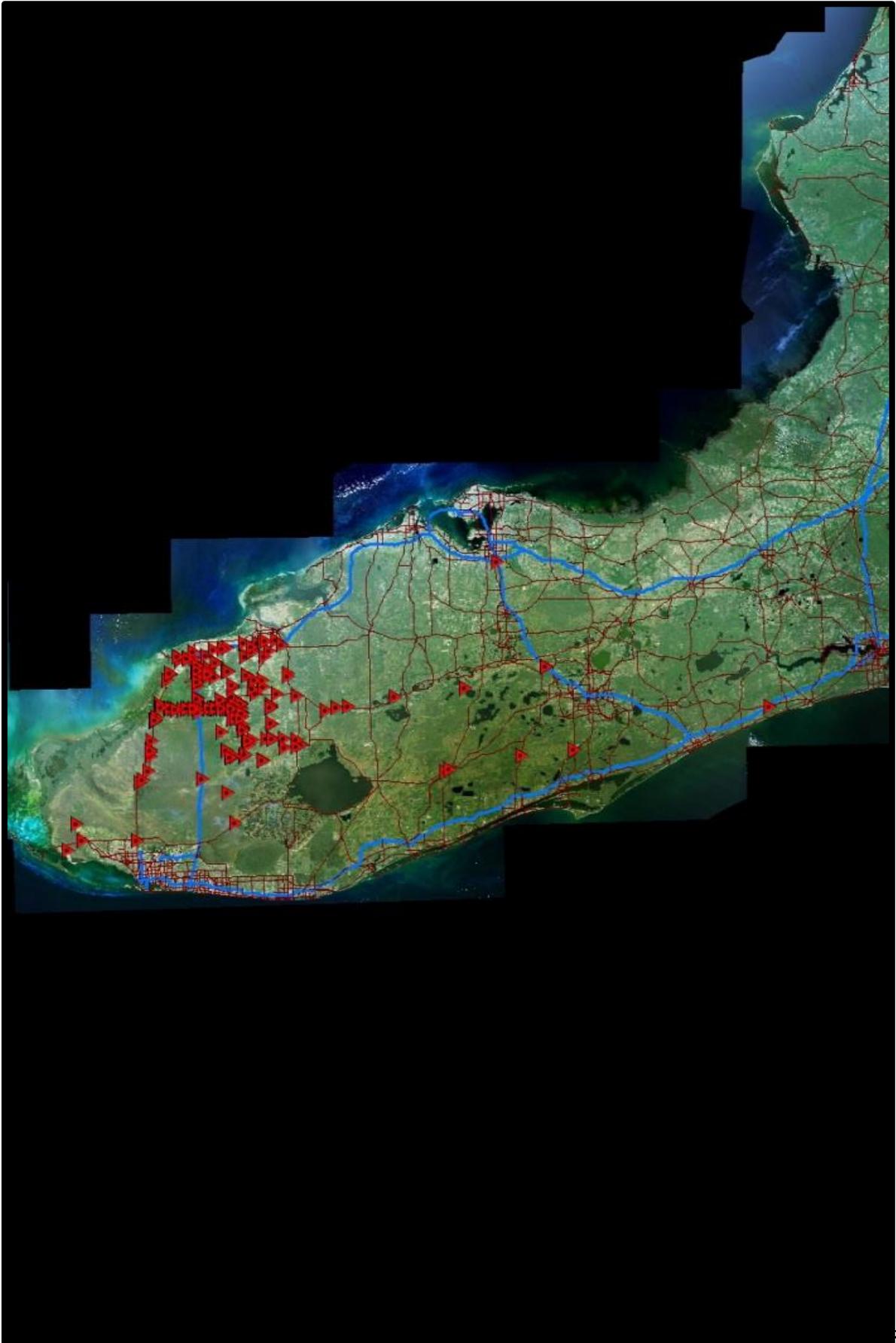
Transportation SubTeam

- The Transportation SubTeam is an 11 member group of appointed stakeholders representing state and federal agencies (including US Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Transportation), academia, environmental organizations, and local transportation planning organizations.
- The group is cooperatively working to assist the Panther Recovery Implementation Team to “identify and prioritize high vehicular mortality areas and recommend risk-reduction measures.” The SubTeam began meeting in fall 2014.
- There were a record 25 endangered Florida panthers struck and killed by vehicles in 2014. The trend for panther vehicle mortalities on roadways, including FDOT maintained facilities (e.g. I-75, SR29, US41, etc.), has risen over the past decade. Also, 226 bears were killed on roadways statewide in 2014.



Documented Panther Roadkills from 1981 to 2014

- Roadkills can have an important detrimental impact on the health and long-term viability of an endangered population from both direct mortality and also by restricting dispersal and range expansion.
- Wildlife-vehicle collisions create a hazard for the driving public.
- The SubTeam's objectives are to:
 - Document hot spots for wildlife-vehicle collisions on existing roadways, and identify planned roadways that may result in wildlife-vehicle collisions. This will help to identify where there may be opportunities to resolve existing conflicts, as well as help to ensure that potential conflicts are recognized early and avoided, minimized, or mitigated.
 - Collect design information for crossing structures, including modifications to bridges, culverts, and other structures that have been shown to be effective in specific locations.
 - Identify opportunities to incorporate structures at strategic locations by working with state and federal agencies and local governments during their respective planning, development, and design processes, and providing assistance with identifying right-of-way needs, land use, partnership opportunities, and construction funding sources.
- Project and products to be produced by the SubTeam include:
 - Mapping known hot spots for wildlife-vehicle collisions, as well as modeling the likely routes that panthers would traverse the landscape (least cost pathways) for regional areas south and north of the Caloosahatchee River. This will create a geographic database that agencies and interested parties can query when projects are contemplated or in the planning process. The SubTeam will also share findings with FDOT, local transportation planning organizations, and municipalities.
 - Compiling information about different crossing structure designs, potential costs, and their potential effectiveness and focal species.
 - Reviewing and making recommendations to update FDOT's Wildlife Crossing Guidelines.



Florida panther roadkills since 1972, red triangle indicates location of collision.

PRIT - Transportation SubTeam

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March 23, 2015