



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 DESERT TORTOISE RECOVERY OFFICE
 1340 Financial Blvd., Suite 234
 Reno, Nevada 89502
 Ph: 775-861-6300 ~ Fax: 775-861-6301



PROGRESS REPORT
January through March 2009

ACTIVITY	GOALS	PROGRESS/STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Recovery Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Recovery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued review and synthesis of, and response to, public and peer-review comments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edit and publish final revised plan Establish regional RITs
Science Advisory Committee (SAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with recovery plan revision process Identify and prioritize science and technical needs specific to desert tortoise recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAR 13: Revised a draft charter for the SAC. In coordination with the San Diego Zoo, discussed revisions to the disease white paper, to be included in the final recovery plan; discussed concepts and approaches to monitoring demographic study areas; brainstormed opportunities and new directions at the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize charter Finalize disease white paper Form disease and translocation workgroups Further develop approach for implementing monitoring of demographic study areas
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"> MOG charter circulated for agency signatures. 12 signatures have been received; many are outstanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate charter for agency signatures Revise RIT terms of reference, and hold follow-up meetings at more local levels to finalize how each RIT will be organized.
Range-wide Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting on 2007 and 2008 surveys Develop study plan to guide monitoring program Complete monitoring for 2009 Secure long-term funding agreements for the monitoring program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperator comment period has ended; draft 2007 report is ready to finalize. 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 and 2009. 2009 crew training was completed on 31 March and monitoring began on 1 April. MAR: Began drafting new agreement with Clark County for funding monitoring in eastern part of range in 2010; low funding levels for western part had noticeable impact on planning and implementing improvements to monitoring program in 2007 through 2009. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize annual report on 2007 monitoring results; draft 2008 results Complete internal draft and initiate external review of long-term monitoring plan Field season debriefing on 9 June Finalize agreement with Clark County for 2010. Continue to seek secure funding from DMG agencies and other sources

DTRO Progress Report, July – December 2008

Recovery Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish master database and spatial decision support system for all desert tortoise data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to coordinate with Redlands Institute staff and others to develop a recovery decision support system. Continue to coordinate with Redlands Institute staff and agency scientists to compile, define, and assimilate spatial data layers for the Mojave desert (e.g., locations of threats and management actions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to meet with relevant parties to develop the database Work with RITs to update database of threats/recovery actions
Recovery Action Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish regional Recovery Implementation Teams (RITs) Develop detailed recovery action plans Implement recovery action plans; track and report progress utilizing the recovery decision support system Monitor effectiveness of recovery actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DTRO is co-lead with the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office on the implementation of a raven management program in CA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the recovery plan has been finalized, RIT members will be appointed and teams organized Raven management working group will meet at least bi-annually; Wildlife Services is scheduled to conduct nest surveys and control activities this spring.
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"> Continued to coordinate activities on a total of 14 active permits. Reviewed or corresponded with several prospective permit applicants. 3 new applications are still pending. 	
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"> Completed and signed MOU for DTCC coordination (Conservation Centers for Species Survival [C2S2], BLM, NDOW, FWS). MAR 1: Implemented cooperative agreement with the Zoological Society of San Diego for DTCC operations. 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"> Continue to implement changes to DTCC husbandry protocols Work with MOU partners to implement SNPLMA planning project for DTCC upgrades
Status Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a 5-year review of the status of the desert tortoise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold pending completion of revised recovery plan. 	
Technical support and guidance for decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with and provide technical support to FWS Ecological Services field offices Develop information syntheses, guidance and protocols, and apply Service and partner programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translocation recommendations Survey protocols Renewable energy guidance: continued to coordinate internally as well as with the Bureau of Land Management and various state governments on renewable energy issues. Ongoing intra- and inter-agency investigation on applying recovery actions to mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue energy-related coordination, including developing best management practices, identifying mechanisms to expedite permitting, and participating in regional planning efforts Continue coordination to facilitate and support the use of recovery actions as mitigation

DTRO Progress Report, July – December 2008

Other Activities

- The DTRO continued to coordinate with the Ft. Irwin Conservation/Mitigation Working Group (CMWG) and research cooperators on desert tortoise translocation related to expansion of the National Training Center. Coordination with and among research teams continued for the Southern Expansion Area translocation. Planning for the Western Expansion Area translocation continued.
- 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, the Conservation Land Acquisition Workgroup, and the Raven Management Workgroup.