



BLM Mojave Desert Tortoise Strategic Plan

Focal Area Concept



Opportunities

- BIL Funding
- Inflation Reduction Act
- Collaboration with DOD RASP



Strategic Plan



BLM Step-Down

- 1988 Desert Tortoise Habitat Management Plan
- 2011 Revised Recovery Plan for the Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise
- Desert Tortoise Recovery Implementation Team goals
- MOG goals/objectives



Vision

BLM lands are a stronghold for the Mojave desert tortoise, supporting viable, increasing species populations distributed across a functioning, intact, connected desert ecosystem.



Mission

Proactively work with partners to develop and commit to resource allocations, conservation measures, research, monitoring, and adaptive management strategies that contribute to recovery and provide long-term conservation for the Mojave desert tortoise and its habitats.

Goals and Objectives



Goals

Conserve MDT on BLM lands such that they contribute substantially to recovery of the species.

Increase success through collaboration.

Prioritize Budget and Staffing.

Effectively communicate BLM's recovery efforts

Objectives

- Ensure increasing and self-sustaining populations
- Proactively restore, protect, manage habitats
- Consider novel techniques and innovative approaches

Internal, external

Identify, address staffing and expertise needs
Focus limited resources

Internal, external

Monitoring and Adaptive Management

- Review of existing data – inform baseline estimates.
 - Line distance sampling – USFWS DTRO (2000 to present)
 - Demographic data – BLM/USGS study plots
 - Demographic data – translocation and head-starting efforts
- Population level monitoring
- Effectiveness monitoring
- Data management
- Adaptive management



Focal Areas



BLM Step-Down

- Rangewide recovery efforts



Focal Areas

Areas believed to be important to the long-term persistence of the tortoise across the species' range where a) recovery resources can be concentrated such that threats can be meaningfully reduced or eliminated within five to ten years; and so that b) local tortoise populations can be stabilized or increased, thereby creating strongholds from which longer-term, rangewide recovery criteria can be approached, and hopefully generalized to a landscape scale.

ID	Focal Area Name	State	Tortoise Status	Habitat Condition	Mgmt Feasibility	Focal Area Category	Main Threats	Potential Mgmt Actions	Additional Designation
21	Coyote Springs	NV	Mod	Med	Med	C	Roads/routes, invasive grass	Fencing/culverts, route rehab, weed mgmt	ACEC
7	Chuckwalla Bench	CA	High	High	High	A	Human visitation, OHV, development, invasive grass	Route rehab, environ education, access regulation	Borders CMAGR
8	Lower Chemehuevi Valley	CA	Mod	Med	High	B	Roads/routes, invasive grasses	?	





Tortoise Status

- Demographic plot data
- Density estimates



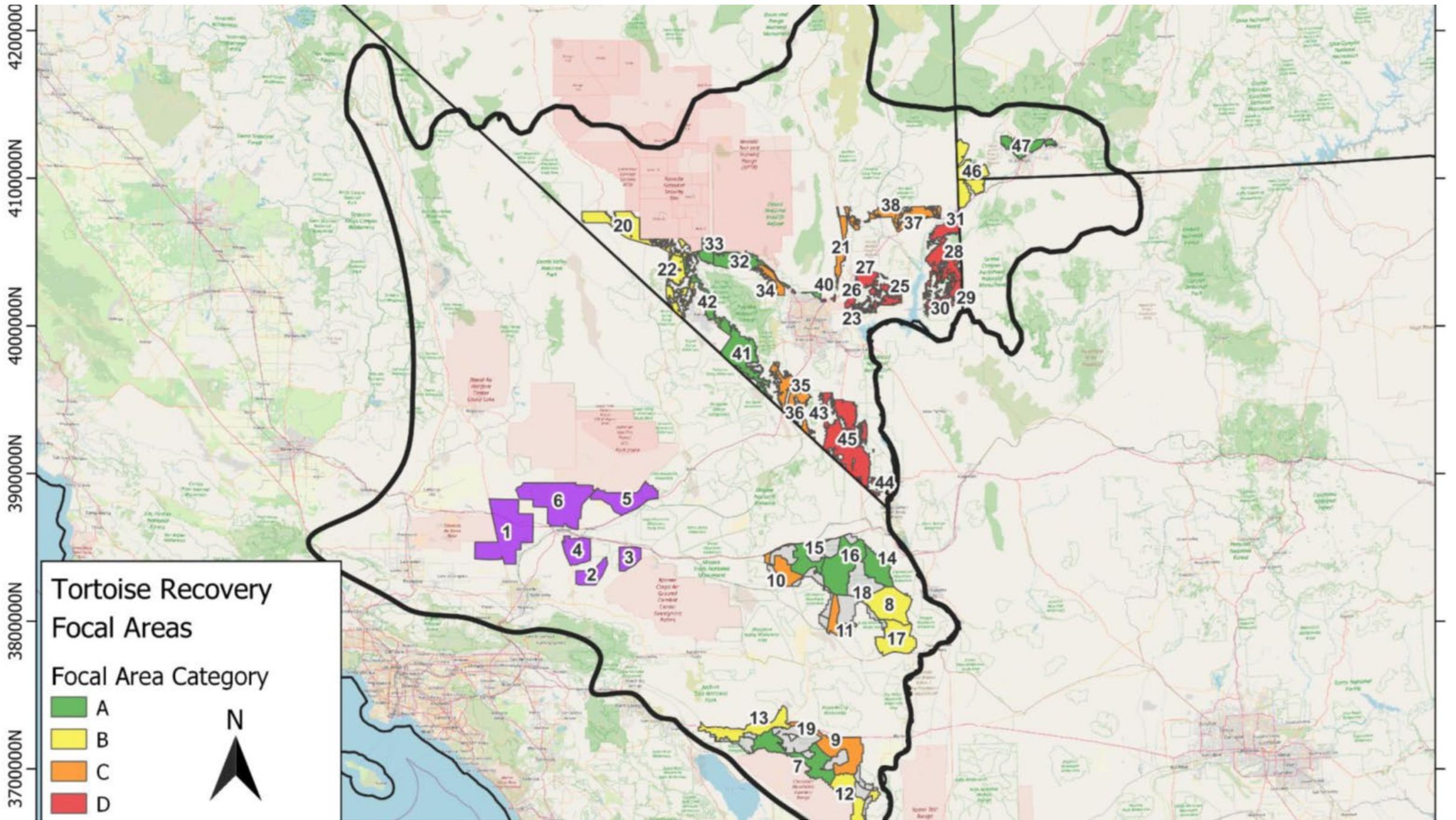
Habitat Condition

- Focus area size, habitat connectivity
- Road density
- Raven density
- Invasive plant cover



Management Feasibility

- Available resources
- Partnerships
- Regulatory framework
- Conflicting uses



A photograph of a tortoise in a desert environment, with a semi-transparent circular overlay on the left side containing text. The tortoise is the central focus, showing its shell and head. The background is a sandy, arid landscape with some dry vegetation.

Next Steps Strategic Plan

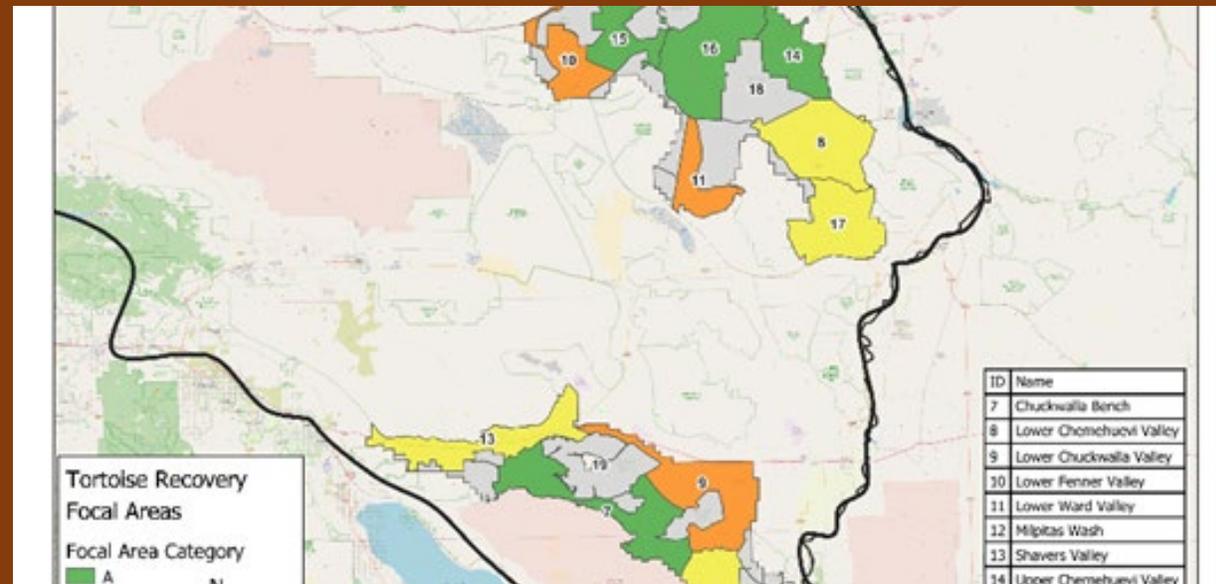
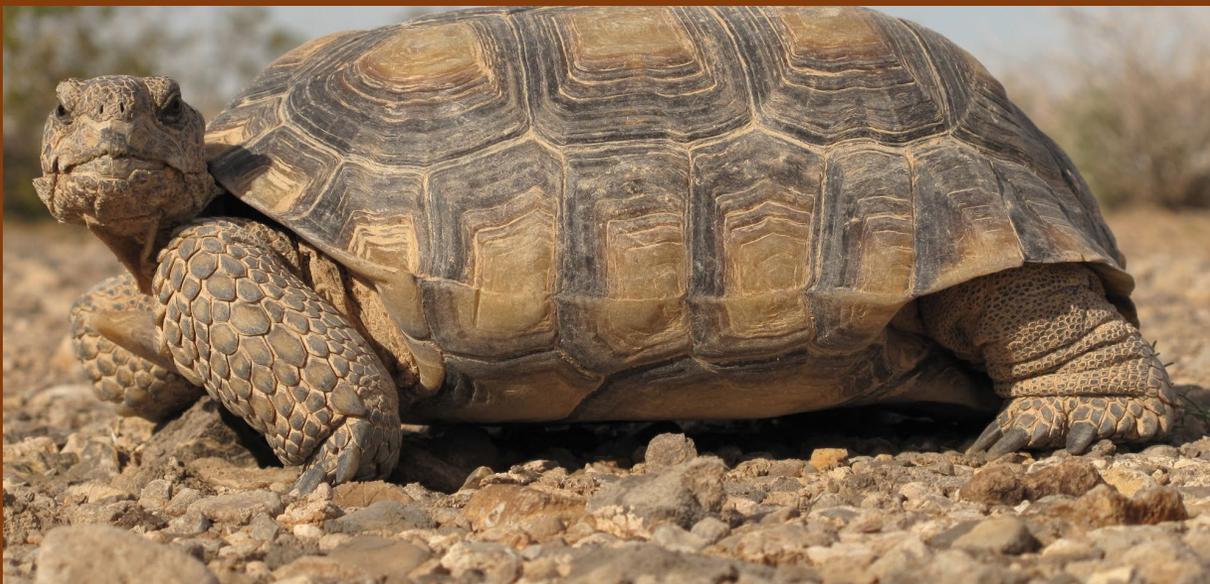
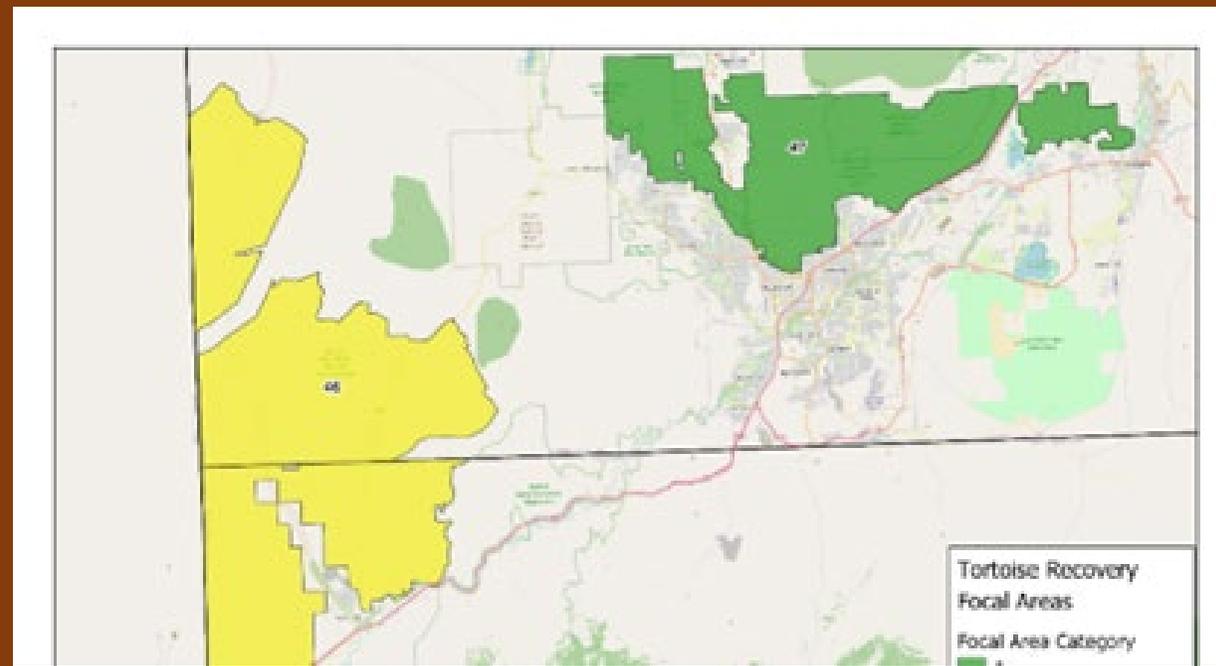
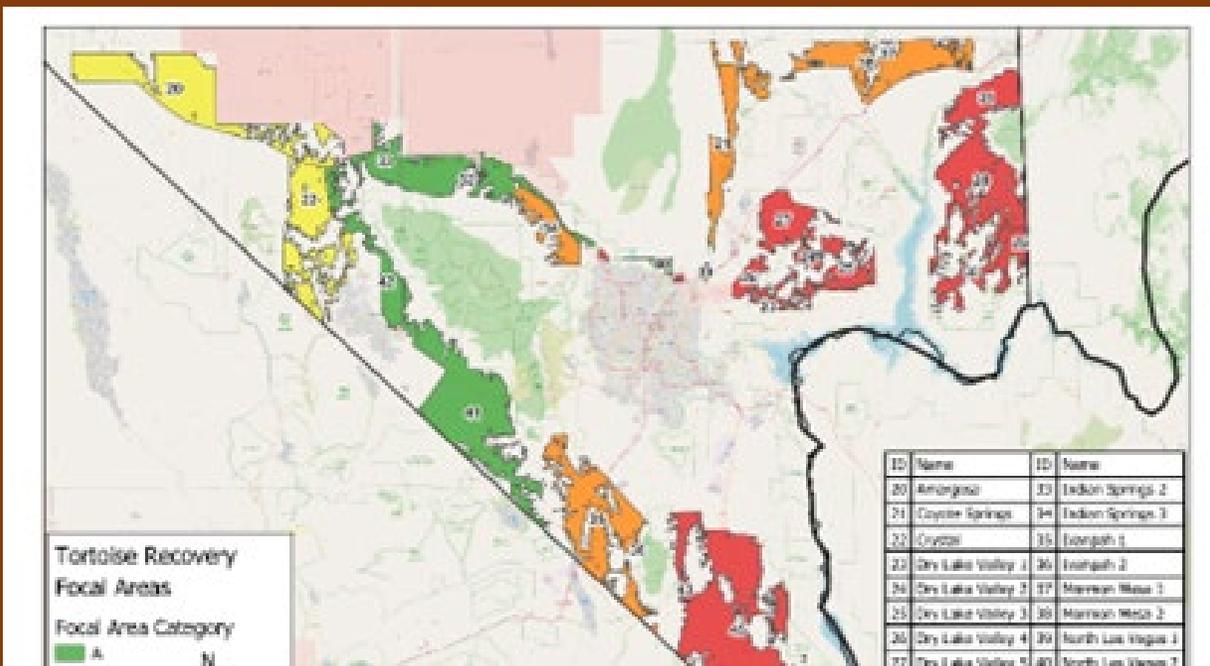
- Ensure consistency in rubric definitions:
 - low → high
 - Tortoise status
 - Habitat condition
 - Management feasibility
- Factor in climate change
- Consider RAD

5-10 Year Action Plan



BLM Step-Down

- BLM Strategic Plan
- BLM Workshop Outcomes
- BLM Focal Areas



Develop Actions

- Addressing primary threats
- Landscape level, “big ticket”
- Habitat connectivity
- Moving the needle toward recovery
- Monitoring/adaptive management

Priority	Tasks	States
Administrative	Cooperative Management Agreements, expand personnel & resources	CA, UT
Direct Mortality	Highway fencing, predator (raven) control, reduce subsidies	CA, NV, UT
Habitat Restoration	Invasive species control, increase connectivity, wild horse/burro removal	AZ, CA, NV, UT
Land Use Planning	mitigate effects of solar projects, urban sprawl and development	AZ, CA, NV
OHV Management	route restoration, unauthorized incursions mapping, closure compliance	AZ, CA, NV
Research and Monitoring	definition of AIM program benchmarks, monitoring protocols, maintain long-term monitoring efforts	AZ, UT
Wildfire Mitigation	implement fuel breaks, model fuel treatments, habitat rehabilitation	AZ, NV, UT



TIMETABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN

Milestone/Task/Activity	Start Date	Completion Date
Phase 1: Compile existing tortoise recovery actions/priorities	Sept 2022	Oct 2022
Phase 2: Identify priority actions in focal areas – small group meetings BLM staff	Nov 2022	Dec 2022
Phase 2: In person workshop	Jan 2023	Feb 2023
Phase 3: Draft 5-10 year action plan	March 2023	March 2023
Phase 3: Finalize action plan and deliver to BLM	April 2023	August 2023





Discussion?

