

Daily Desert Tortoise Report form

Turn in to USFWS every 3 months

Project Name and Start Date:

Circle one:

Desert Tortoise Survey Biologist/Desert Tortoise Monitor/Field Contact Representative

Name and Date qualifications sent to USFWS:

Date of survey: **Circle one:** More active season, Less active season

Site description:

Area to be surveyed:

GPS Start-point: (UTM coordinates, NAD83 Zone 12, elevation in meters):

GPS End-point:

Start time: **End time:**

Weather: **Start Temp:** °C **End Temp:** °C **Expected High Temp:** °C

Habitat Quality	Today's project action	Survey #	Perimeter checked during this survey	Hazards checked? (List hazards, including vehicles)	Measures to safe-guard hazards	Desert tortoise sign and health
			100 m buffer:			
			Temporary fence:			

Additional comments (include date and time):

Phone numbers to call if a desert tortoise is seen or sign is found in areas not found during pre-project surveys (Reminder – do not approach or handle desert tortoise. Immediately halt all project activities).

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources: 435-688-1426
Washington County HCP Administration: 435-256-6310
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: 801-975-3330
Bureau of Land Management: 435-688-3204

GLOSSARY

Clearance sweep: On the ground visual inspection of all project activities planned for the day plus a 100 m Zone of Influence (ZOI) buffer (if temporary fencing is not used). Thorough inspection of any potential hazards (see list below). Clearance sweeps may be conducted by a desert tortoise monitor or approved field contact representative properly trained by a desert tortoise monitor (see conservation measures). The project area and ZOI should be surveyed for desert tortoise and sign in parallel transects separated by 10 m.

Occupied Habitat: Desert tortoise or desert tortoise sign have been identified within a 600 meters.

Habitat Quality: This designation is based on the physical and biological features necessary for the species. When we designated critical habitat for the species, we defined these features as: sufficient space to support viable populations within each of the six recovery units and to provide for movement, dispersal, and gene flow; sufficient quality and quantity of forage species and the proper soil conditions to provide for the growth of these species; suitable substrates for burrowing, nesting, and overwintering; burrows, caliche caves, and other shelter sites; sufficient vegetation for shelter from temperature extremes and predators; and habitat protected from disturbance and human-caused mortality (USFWS 1994).

High Quality Habitat areas may or may not include the presence of live tortoises and/or active burrows. The presence of live tortoise is assumed to also be High Quality Habitat (Occupied/High Quality). Where no tortoise are found in presence/absence survey, high quality habitat will include:

1. at least 35 acres of continuous habitat (may include patchy habitats connected by artificial or natural corridors);
2. sufficient quality and quantity of forage;
3. suitable substrates for burrowing, nesting, and overwintering;

4. slopes and topography hospitable to desert tortoises;
5. suitable shelter vegetation; and
6. habitat protected or removed from human disturbance.

Medium Quality Habitat is defined as

1. at least 35 acres of continuous habitat (may include patchy habitats connected by artificial or natural corridors);
2. suitable substrates for burrowing, nesting, and overwintering;
3. decreasing quantity of high quality forage, increasing presence of cool-season annual grasses;
4. may include some steeper slopes less hospitable to tortoises;
5. More blackbrush and less creosote than high quality habitat. Creosote, when found, is located in more isolated pockets;
6. Increased disturbance and probability of human-caused mortalities.

Low Quality Habitat is defined as

1. Less than 35 acres of continuous habitat (may include patchy habitats connected by artificial or natural corridors);
2. suitable substrates for burrowing, nesting, and overwintering;
3. forage is predominantly cool-season annual grasses with very low presence of suitable forage;
4. More blackbrush and less creosote than high quality habitat. Creosote, when found, is located in more isolated pockets;
5. may include some steeper slopes less hospitable to tortoises;
6. highly developed, cultivated, or otherwise disturbed areas.

Unsuitable Habitat is defined as

1. Substrates are not suitable for burrowing, nesting, and overwintering or
2. may include some steeper slopes inhospitable to tortoises;
3. highly developed, cultivated, or otherwise disturbed areas.

Hazards: Activities that may cause hazardous conditions to desert tortoise.

Projects may include additional hazards not included in this list:

Pick-up trucks, Large equipment, Tall structures (raven perching), Trenches, Pits, Backfilling of trenches or any other pits, Re-contouring, Reclamation, Standing water, Hazardous materials, Trash (raven and predator control)