

Panther Recovery Implementation Team (PRIT)

Transportation Sub-team

Meeting Minutes Summary

June 7, 2016

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 1 Office, Bartow, FL

Attendees:

Amber Crooks (phone)
Elizabeth Fleming (phone)
Terry Gilbert (phone)
Darrell Land (phone)
Nancy Payton (phone)
Gwen Pipkin
Brent Setchell
Don Scott
Dan Smith (phone)
John Wrublik (phone)

Members of the Public and other Guests:

Mark Easley, Kisinger Campo
Kenneth McDonald, FWS
Nicole Monies, FDOT
Tom Pride, AECOM
Bill Samuels, Florida Panther Project
Josh Sokol
Nicole Cribbs, Faller Davis
Kristin Caruso, Scheda Ecological Associates

- Approval of the minutes with edits
- Transportation Member Comments: Amber and Nancy are working on the improvements to contributions for traffic-generating projects.
- Liaison Update: Recovery Subteam meeting was held. PRIT core team meeting was held in Gainesville on April 7, 2016.
- South Florida Hotspots
 - The team reviewed Darrell Land hotspots. Darrell's hotspots did not include segments where historical roadkills had occurred prior to crossings. It did include areas where crossings are if they did not adequately alleviate these hotspots.
 - Hotspots map can provide guidance in technical assistance comments/consultations, and provide information for the Wildlife Crossing Guidelines.

- There was a consensus that hotspots with 1-2 roadkills would be shown in the mapping, but could be addressed together in the narrative. Although there are hotspots north of the Caloosahatchee, there was a consensus that the hotspots document will focus on south Florida.
- There was a consensus that although numerical or alphabetical prioritization was not appropriate, that essentially the severity of the hotspot could be used to help with prioritization.
- Amber discussed missing data and there was a discussion about how new roadkill and/or crossing information would be adopted into the document.
 - The Subteam will add new hotspots with updated mortality information. This will be a living document.
- It was noted by several Subteam members that the hotspots are based only on roadkill. The analysis does not include panther telemetry, land cover, or other factors.
 - Brent and Nancy wanted the product to focus on roadkill-specific hotspot areas. Amber wants to be sure that it is not presumed that this is all the information. There was a consensus that it will be clearly stated in the spatial data layer and accompanying document that the product shows roadkills only, and that other data and science may need to be consulted to determine appropriate siting of crossing structures.
- Amber discussed perceived inconsistencies between files provided in February 2016 and in June 2016. The model's break points had changed.
 - Dan and Nancy suggested that break points should be standardized. There was a discussion that with new mortalities and hotspots becoming more severe with more data, the key and meaning of 'severity' will change with each addition. The group will need to have continued discussions about the break points.
- Presentation to PRIT core team on September 1, 2016 regarding the hotspots.
 - Presenters will focus on highest two or three levels and provide zoomed in maps of the areas. The product would also include a table describing the hotspots and a landscape scale map.
- Public comment
 - Kristin Caruso asked how Darrell selected 1km. Darrell will provide his rationale in his methodologies document.
 - Mark Easley spoke about methodology and encouraged use of roadkill density per 1km as a method to identify hotspots.
 - Ken McDonald suggested break points by percentage.
 - Tom Pride stated that the Service received over 2,400 comments in the Eastern Collier Habitat Conservation Plan EIS scoping period. Scoping Report will follow.

Next meeting: August 16, 10am-12pm by Webinar. The main agenda item will be to discuss the South Florida Hotspots product and September PRIT presentation.