

2022 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one)

2022 1st

2022 2nd

2022 3rd

2022 4th

Grant Program, Number and Title: GSA 00046 / **Eastern Box Turtle Status Assessment, Conservation Plan, and BMPs.**

Organization: The Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and Conservation

Project Leader: Lori Erb and Brandon Ruhe

Abstract: Please provide a short (1-2 paragraphs) abstract that addresses EACH of the following: the objectives of your project, accomplishments to date, future plans and timelines with an estimate for when the project will be completed.

The objective of the Eastern Box Turtle (EBT) project is to develop a status assessment and conservation plan for the EBT to advance conservation efforts for this species. Accomplishments during this quarter includes the completion of three conference calls with the Eastern Box Turtle Steering Committee (EBT SC), corresponding with the grant Co-PI on grant tasks, corresponding with volunteer surveyors to provide guidance, organizing and entering the MACHAC 2021 field season data, compiling the 2021 data from all the northeast states, coordinating with the pollinator RNC group and the Northeast Habitat Technical Committee, and administrative actions (e.g., backing up files, timesheets, drafting reports).

During the next quarter, we plan to hold monthly calls, assist surveyors with questions related to conducting surveys, collaborate with the grant Co-PI, conduct surveys in multiple mid-Atlantic states, and continue to compile and summarize historical data and literature on prescribed fires and its potential effects on box turtles and their habitat.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

Progress Achieved: (For each Goal/Objective, list Planned and Actual Accomplishments)

- Coordinated a led three project steering committee meetings.
- Drafted meeting notes from our monthly steering committee meetings.
- Conducted a few meetings with the project co-PI, Patrick Roberts.
- Planned and prepared for numerous meetings with project partners.
- Coordinated with the pollinator RNC group.
- Coordinated with the Northeast Habitat Technical Committee.
- Coordinated with several members of the steering committee on potential use of additional funding.
- Reviewed MACHAC-WMI contract language for a contract amendment.
- Drafted and posted a job announcement for several positions, for additional survey work throughout the northeast.
- Continued a literature review of information for xeric habitat best management practices.
- Provided support and guidance to volunteer surveyors (e.g., with site selection, survey planning, permitting, surveys, data entry).
- Organized and entered the MACHAC 2021 field data.
- Compiled monitoring data collected in 2021 from all the northeastern states.
- Started planning for the 2022 field season (general survey plans for Maryland and New Jersey).

- Drafted permit applications for Maryland and Pennsylvania.
- Drafted annual reports for the 2021 permits issued.
- Drafted survey reports for select landowners and statewide reports for both Maryland and New York.
- Drafted an interim quarterly report.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Hold monthly conference calls with the EBT SC
- Provide assistance to surveyors and researchers as needed while preparing for the 2022 survey season.
- Perform quality control on the 2021 field season data collected by MACHAC.
- Perform surveys in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.
- Continue to review and summarize information and literature on prescribed fire and eastern box turtles.
- Continue to coordinate with my Co-PI on the development of a SDM, site mapping guidelines, CANs, and development of BMPs.
- Continue to coordinate with the pollinator group and habitat technical committee.
- Organize and back up files.
- Complete a quarterly report.

Expected End Date: The end date of the next quarter is June 30, 2022

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$52,988.68

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$68,499.72

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? Yes

Signature:

Brandon M. Rule

Date: 8/29/2022