

2020 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one)

2020 1st

2020 2nd

2020 3rd

2020 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 Eastern Box Turtle 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), continuing to development survey protocols, field forms, and instructional videos, coordinating and training surveyors to perform population monitoring surveys, continuing to compile EBT data, and working with the state leads to request disease and road related injury data from wildlife rehabilitators.

During the next quarter, we plan to hold monthly calls, continue to development of the regional database, assist surveyors with field season needs, collaboration with partners to develop a tracking app and landowner brochure, compiling historical data and literature on prescribed fires, and conduct population monitoring surveys.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

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

- Organized and lead 3 monthly conference calls with the EBT RCN Steering Committee and drafted meeting notes.
- Revised the survey protocol to further develop guidelines for post-fire surveys at management sites and for dog-assisted surveys.
- Revised the field forms and the data entry spreadsheet.
- Held a call with interested partners to discuss (and flesh out) the post-burn survey protocol for sites managed with fire.
- Created new field forms for surveys at management sites.
- Worked with Antioch GIS lab to help guide the development of a spatial tracking app to be used by surveyors during EBT surveys.
- Created training videos on how to delineate sites and plots, determine survey options, conduct surveys, process turtles, and use the tracking app.
- Held a 3 hour training webinar for 55 EBT population monitoring surveyors across the northeast.
- Assisted MD and PA surveyors to obtain the appropriate state and landowner permits and permissions needed to perform surveys.
- Coordinated surveyors in MD and PA for population monitoring surveys, assigning site ID codes, turtle

- ID codes, and addressing other needs.
- Held two meetings to discuss the potential for an EBT online regional database, which would include security protection measures.
- Worked with states to draft a letter requesting data on EBT injuries and disease from wildlife rehabilitators.
- Provided guidance to University of Delaware students for the development of a landowner brochure to encourage landowners to improve wildlife habitat on their property.
- Applied for permits to conduct surveys in MD and PA.
- Entered into data sharing agreements.
- Entered 2019 PA survey data.
- Organized and back up files.
- Drafted a quarterly report.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Hold monthly conference calls with the EBT SC.
- Continue development of the EBT regional database.
- Continue to provide assistance and recommendation to the Antioch GIS lab for the development and trial run of survey tracking app.
- Continue to provide assistance to the Univ. of Delaware students to develop a landowner brochure.
- Provide assistance to surveyors as needed.
- Assist with coordination of pre- and post-burn EBT surveys
- Assist with the coordination of trail surveys using dogs.
- Continue to collect historical information and literature on prescribed fire.
- Conduct population monitoring surveys.
- Start to organize and enter survey data.
- Organize and back up files.
- Complete a quarterly report.

Expected End Date: 2/28/2023

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$26,625.41

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$68,499.72

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? Yes

Signature:

Date: 06/23/2020