

2020 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one) 2020 1st 2020 2nd 2020 3rd **2020 4th**

Grant Program, Number and Title: RCN, GSA 00047; Eastern Box Turtle Status Assessment, Conservation Plan, and Best Management Practices.

Organization: H. Patrick Roberts (Independent Contractor)

Project Leader: H. Patrick Roberts

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 this project is to develop a status assessment and conservation plan for the Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) in the northeastern United States. This contract with the Wildlife Management Institute was executed at the very end of the first quarter of 2019. As a result of this delayed start, the timeline for the initial objectives of this project was shifted forward accordingly.

During the fourth quarter of 2020, Lori Erb (of MACHAC) and I held monthly Steering Committee calls in October, November, and December to discuss progress toward the overarching goals and objectives of the project. We made final decisions on adjustments to the monitoring and management-related protocols, which will be available to the public at northeastturtles.org within the next month. We held conference calls with multiple entities regarding the development of xeric BMPs and use of monitoring data for additional eastern box turtle research. We continued to make progress in refining species distribution models. Last, we continue to conduct a review of literature that will eventually contribute to the status assessment and conservation plan.

Immediate next steps will be to (1) continue to refine species distribution models, (2) make progress on BMP materials, (3) begin to develop a standardized population mapping protocol, and (4) continue to hold monthly conference calls. We expect to complete this project by February 2023.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes.

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

Planned and accomplished:

- Monthly conference calls
- Continue to collect occurrence data
- Continue to refine species distribution models
- Continue to develop public communications materials

Difficulties Encountered: We have encountered some challenges around occurrence data collection in certain portions of the range. However, we feel confident that we will eventually acquire sufficient data to improve species distribution models.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Continue to hold monthly conference calls
- Continue to refine species distribution models
- Continue to develop BMP materials
- Begin development of regional population mapping protocol

Expected End Date: February 28, 2023.

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$34,247.91 (without match)

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$68,500

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? Yes.

Signature: 

Date: 01/31/2021