

2021 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one) 2021 1st 2021 2nd **2021 3rd** 2021 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 third quarter of 2021, Lori Erb (of MACHAC) and I held monthly Steering Committee calls in July, August, and September to discuss progress toward the overarching goals and objectives of the project. A substantial portion of my time was also spent finalizing the standardized mapping protocol and testing it within select portions of the region. I also developed and distributed two surveys, one for state agency biologists that will help to guide development of the eastern box turtle BMPs, and the other for eastern box turtle experts throughout the range that will play a role in prioritizing sites during development of the conservation area network. I also coordinated and assisted the collection of genetic samples with Mike Jones in Massachusetts.

Next steps will be to (1) implement the mapping protocol for the entire region, (2) continue to support the development of BMP materials and literature review, (3) use expert opinion survey results to develop ranking metric for the regional conservation area network, (4) begin to attribute sites (if mapping is completed) with landscape and other information that will be used for ranking sites, and (5) 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:

- Held monthly conference calls
- Incorporated HerpMapper data into regional occurrence database
- Continued to support development of BMP materials
- Established the regional population mapping protocol
- Surveyed state biologist about BMPs
- Tested mapping protocol using species occurrence data in ArcMap

Difficulties Encountered: None.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Continue to hold monthly conference calls
- Continue to support development of BMP materials
- Implement mapping protocol for the entire region
- If mapping is completed, attribute sites with information used for ranking

Expected End Date: February 28, 2023.

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$47,090.76 (without match)

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$68,500

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

Signature:



Date: 10/30/21