

2019 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one)

2019 1st

2019 2nd

2019 3rd

2019 4th

Grant Program, Number and Title: GSA 00074 - Conservation Plan for the Blanding's Turtle and associated Species of Conservation Need in the Northeastern United States

Organization: Oriante Society

Project Leader: Kiley Briggs

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.

Continuing along a path towards identifying at least ten sites to focus future Blanding's Turtle conservation efforts within, Oriante held follow-up meetings with additional state biologists in the state of New York, as well as with conservation partners with Zoo New England and the Parker River Clean Water Association, both in Massachusetts. By the end of 2019, ten sites were identified for further attention in this process, with three more expected to be identified by January 27. To begin the process of producing Best Management Practice (BMP) guidelines and documents, Oriante met with Dr. Lisabeth Willey of the American Turtle Observatory (ATO) to discuss priorities and needs over the upcoming year. In that meeting we agreed that ATO would complete their current work on Blanding's Turtle BMPs on an expedited timeline so that The Oriante Society can then use what they produce to create documents outlining the BMPs for a variety of audiences beginning in 2020. This work may begin later this winter, or in mid-summer. Oriante also attended the Spotted, Wood, and Blanding's Turtle Symposium in Berkley Springs West Virginia in November.

The next major stage in this process will be to begin scheduling site-specific meetings. The goals of these meetings is to determine conservation priorities and a timeline for action at each of the chosen sites. Contingent on the schedules of others who must be at these meetings, this could begin as early as this winter, otherwise they will be scheduled for this summer. Managing the geospatial database and inputting data has not yet begun due to the database, which is being prepared by a separate contractor, not yet being finalized. Apart from the database not being ready for use, the project is progressing on schedule with most deliverables expected to be met by the winter of 2020/2021, after which we will spend a year helping the states implement site-specific conservation plans prior to submitting a final report no later than March 2022.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter?

Yes

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

- Continued meetings to determine actionable conservation needs in all 36 high priority sites.
- Worked with five states to identify ten sites to focus on, with three more sites to be determined.
- Attended Spotted, Wood, and Blanding's Turtle Symposium in West Virginia
- Met with Dr. Lisabeth Willey to strategize the BMP refinement and publication process
- Participated in three monthly conference calls

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Difficulties Encountered:

None so far.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Final site selection by January 27
- In-person meeting with Blanding's Turtle Working Group in Massachusetts on Jan. 27
- Work with Dr. Willey to prioritize BMP document needs and begin production
- Begin site-specific meetings in each state before spring if scheduling with partners permits.
- Begin populating geospatial database (if database becomes ready)

Expected End Date:

March 2022

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter):

Total Approved Budgeted Funds:

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? YES

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly 'K. R.', written in a cursive style.

Date: January 16, 2020