

# 2019 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one)      2019 1<sup>st</sup>      2019 2<sup>nd</sup>      2019 3<sup>rd</sup>      2019 4<sup>th</sup>

Grant Program, Number and Title: RCN, GSA 00045, Spotted Turtle in New York

Organization: SUNY Potsdam Research Foundation

Project Leader: Glenn Johnson

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 overarching objective of this RCN project is to support the strategic implementation of regional conservation planning for at-risk turtles in the Northeastern States, addressing the most time-sensitive research and management needs for at least five priority species (Blanding's, Eastern Box, Wood, Spotted Turtles, and Northern Diamondback Terrapins) through four separate but complementary initiatives.

SUNY Potsdam has specific tasks to contribute toward this overarching objective for **Spotted Turtles**. These are:

1. Coordinate selection of study areas with the State, and permissions and permits that will be required. This component of the project has been completed for sites sampled this quarter. For sites proposed for the next round of sampling 2020 field season, this process has begun (some permits and permissions have been granted) and at least 3 sites have been selected. This will continue into the next quarter and into next year.
2. Conduct Trap Rapid Assessments (TRA), Demographic Assessments (DA) or Visual Rapid Assessments (VRA) surveys for spotted turtles at 10 – 15 sites. This task was completed for 11 sites (see below)
3. Collect DNA samples of each individual spotted turtle encountered. This task has begun with 70 samples collected

Future plans include conducting surveys at least six additional TRA sites and one additional DA site in the 2020 field season. All field work (trapping and blood sampling) is anticipated to be completed by August 2020 with a final report prepared by October 2020.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

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

## 1. Selection of study areas

Study area site selection for 2019 as well as some for 2020 was completed in the previous quarter.

## 2. Conduct Trap Rapid Assessments (TRA), Demographic Assessments (DA)

This task for 2019 was completed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter and results were reported in that quarterly report. 10 Trap Rapid Assessments and 1 Demographic Assessment was completed in 2019 and total of 88 unique spotted turtles were captured during this quarter.

Data entry, including a review for errors, was completed in this quarter and the information was submitted to Lori Erb.

### 3. Collect DNA samples

This task for 2019 was completed in the previous quarter. Samples were not yet sent to the lab yet, but will be in the current quarter.

#### Difficulties Encountered:

- Some difficulty setting and checking traps by one person at several hard-to access sites
- Collecting very subjective habitat data i.e. percent underwater vegetation
- Data collection is lengthy for both turtle processing and trap setting, limiting sampling at only two or in some cases, one site per day.
- For some sites, there were delays in obtaining permission to access, but we were not denied at any site so far.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter: all genetic samples collected to date to the lab.

Expected End Date: November 2020

#### Costs:

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$10,918.21.

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$23,333.

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? Yes

Signature:



Date: 23 October 2019