



Date of Issuance: July 27, 2022

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM PROJECT COMPLETION SUMMARY:

DESERT TORTOISE TELEMETRY AROUND CULVERTS

2015-ECOCENTRIC-1580E

The work for the above reference project has been completed. Below is a summary of project related information.

The purpose of the above referenced project was:

The aim of the study was to record tortoise movement and assess their utilization of box culverts along Highway 95 using GPS data loggers and radio telemetry encounters.

The major accomplishments or findings of this project include:

Movement data was collected from March 2021 to May 2022, using radio telemetry encounters and deploying i-gotU GT-120 Global Positioning System (GPS) data loggers on 15 resident tortoises (6 female, 9 male) for a total of 311 radio telemetry encounters and 67 unique GPS logger deployments, comprising 51,259 location recordings. Of significance, one male resident tortoise (CC0477) was recorded utilizing a culvert to cross the highway twice during the project: moving to the south side of the highway in April, and returning to the north side on June 30, 2021. Unfortunately, monitored tortoises experienced significant mortality. Only three tortoises survived to the project conclusion, all of which were female. Ten tortoises (3 female, 7 male) were found dead between June and October 2022, and all these mortality events were thought to be caused by canid predation. Two male tortoises went missing over the summer and are presumed to have been predated. Resident tortoises experienced a mortality rate of 66.67% (missing tortoises assumed alive) or 80% (missing tortoises presumed dead) over the first six months of the project (comprising most of the March-October active season). While we were able to record the movement data on the resident tortoises, the project fell short of accomplishing the intended goal due to the high resident tortoise mortality and subsequent non-release of translocated tortoises.

For more information about this project and/or for other Project Reports or Symposium Reports, please visit our [website](#)

If you have any questions about this project please contact DCP Project Manager Scott Cambrin at (702) 455-3859.



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