



Desert Tortoise Recovery Planning and Implementation

Desert Tortoise Recovery Office

GAO & DTRPAC



GAO

United States General Accounting Office
Report to Congressional Requesters

December 2002

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Research Strategy and Long-Term Monitoring Needed for the Mojave Desert Tortoise Recovery Program



GAO-03-23

DTRPAC Report

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Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan Assessment

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GAO/DTRPAC Conclusions

- The original recovery plan was an excellent guide toward recovery
- Losing ground partly because the plan has not been fully implemented
- Effectiveness unknown
- Funding uncertain
- Need better coordination
- Land management plans taking steps to implement recovery plan
- Establishment of DTRO



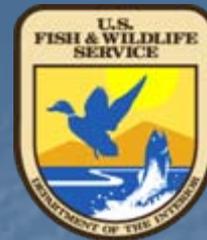
DMG Background

- DMG five-year plan
 - Goal 3: Recover the desert tortoise in the California recovery units
 - Goal 9: Monitor desert tortoise population status in relation to recovery goals for the California deserts' recovery units
- Work groups
 - Desert Tortoise Information & Education Work Group
 - Desert Tortoise Recovery Action Planning Work Group



Recovery Action Plans

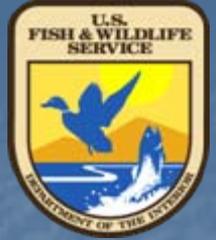
- List and prioritize recovery actions
- Specific portions of the tortoise's range
- Next 5-10 years
- Prioritize activities that are
 - Immediately implementable
 - Broad support
- Basis of revised recovery plan



Recovery Action Plan Steps

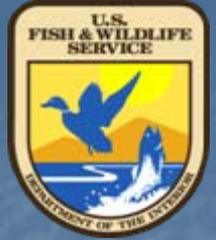
- Revised threat assessments
- Compilation of recovery actions in existing management plans
- Reconcile current recovery actions with prioritized threats
- Identify additional recovery actions needed to address threats
- Identify research needed to determine recovery effectiveness

Stakeholders



- Goal: Incorporate stakeholder contributions directly into Recovery Action Plan step-down narratives

Funding



- Monitoring
- Management actions
- Research

Science Advisory Committee

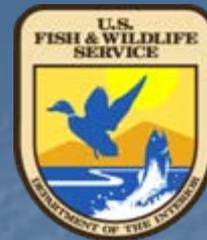


- Advice to DTRO to assist DMG and MOG in recovery planning and implementation
- Researcher/SAC meeting
 - Annual event
 - Permit requirement



Monitoring

- Year 5 of range-wide distance sampling
- Comprehensive synthesis of results
 - Managers' forum planned for fall
 - Methodological advances
 - Biological results
 - Direction of program
 - 5-year report
 - December 2005



Challenges

- Coordination issues
 - Streamlining permitting
 - Data management
- Funding
 - Comprehensive monitoring program
 - Effectiveness of recovery actions
- Support of DTRO process