

Agency/Organization: Tortoise Group

Project Name: Road Warriors 2024-2025

Project Number: 2023-TORTGRP-2335A

Reporting Period: Quarterly Progress Report (July 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025)

Project Contact Name and Information: Nathan Wood, 702-427-3634,
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**QUESTION 1: What did you accomplish during this reporting period?
How did these accomplishments help you reach the goal of your project?
If relevant, what indicators or benchmarks were used to determine your progress?**

During this reporting period the Tortoise Group was able to complete 7.5 miles of fence inspections along I-15 southbound between Mile Marker 72 and the US-93/I-15 Interchange. No road mortality surveys were completed during this quarter.

Nathan Wood (Tortoise Group board member) was approved by Kelly Douglas at USFWS to be the new Authorized Desert Tortoise Biologist for the project. In addition, the NDOW Special Collections Permit was updated to name Nathan Wood as the Responsible Party. Both the NDOW permit and email confirmation from USFWS was provided to DCP and NDOT staff as the project team.

Through communication with Kristi Holcomb at NDOT, a new GPS method of recording fence inspection data was adopted: NDOT provided a specific map on the Field Maps app which allowed real-time updates to their data showing exact locations of reported damage in order to enhance accuracy and efficiency.

QUESTION 2: What, if any, problems were encountered? Briefly describe those problems and the manner in which they were dealt.

The Tortoise Group did not have an Executive Director for much of the quarter, and so there was no staff member to lead and carry out the work. However, Tortoise Group recruited a new Executive Director, Aerial West, in September 2025. By the time Aerial was onboarded there was limited time to complete the fence inspection surveys by the end of the quarter, so we completed what we could in the time frame to ensure some mileage was completed.

Due to the delay in fieldwork, NDOT staff completed the remainder of road mileage assigned to Tortoise Group. However, through communication with Kristi Holcomb at NDOT, new road segments were assigned to Tortoise Group, as detailed below:

- I-15 MP 72 to the US 93/I-15 Interchange on the **southbound** side for 7.5 miles.
- US 93 **northbound** from US 93/I-15 Interchange to MP 75.25 (end of fence) for 23.25 miles.

- US 93 **southbound** from MP 75.25 to MP 66 for 9.25 miles.

QUESTION 3: What, if any, proposed activities were not completed? Briefly describe those activities, the reasons they were not completed and your plans for carrying them out.

The Tortoise Group could not carry out any road mortality surveys due to the limited time remaining from when the new Executive Director was onboarded and the end of the quarter. However, there is still sufficient time in the season for the road mortality surveys to be completed and this will be prioritized in the beginning of the next quarter.

QUESTION 4: What is the calculated percent of work completed? 62.5% (of fence inspections and road mortality surveys)

QUESTION 5: Do you foresee any upcoming problems with future project activities? If so, how do you propose to overcome those problems?

Now we have an Executive Director we will be able to continue the fence inspections and road mortality surveys to complete the fieldwork and required mileages on time as per the SOW.

Scheduling days for when the ADTB Nathan Wood is available to be on site during the fence inspections may be difficult due to his work schedule, however, Kelly Douglas at USFWS has confirmed that it would be possible for fieldwork to continue without Nathan Wood being onsite if he is available on an on-call basis and able to attend site should a desert tortoise or other biological issue be raised. Aerial West has received full training on the project and site work and there are no concerns with her leading the fieldwork.

QUESTION 6: Is there anything else you want to tell the DCP about this project?
Not applicable at this time.

QUESTION 7: What was produced during the reporting period?

Data deliverable for field work during this reporting period (to be submitted by 10/9/25). The Quarterly Progress Report for the second quarter was submitted.