

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



FALL 1999

OUR 24TH YEAR

Our Goal: To assure the continued survival of viable populations of the desert tortoise throughout its range.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM NEWS

Arrangements are now being made for the 25th Annual Desert Tortoise Council Symposium and Business Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. Our Silver Anniversary Symposium promises to be one of the most interesting, informative, and important events in our history.

In the last 25 years the desert tortoise has gone from an obscure reptile to the flagship of desert conservation, been listed as a threatened species by the Federal government, and experienced drastic declines due to a suite of impacts and causes. During that time the Desert Tortoise Council has been in the forefront of the efforts to better understand and protect the species and habitats upon which it depends.

Several special sessions are planned to commemorate the work of the Desert Tortoise Council over the last quarter of a century, to explore the current situation for desert tortoises, and to outline a course for the next 25 years. Additional sessions will include traditional subjects of interest for this Symposium, such as the biology, ecology, physiology, and management of the species, as well as additional, new topics that are currently being researched.

Proceedings from the Symposium will be prepared and made available to the public. Please refer to the call for papers in this newsletter.

Due to the success of last year's multiple field trips, several field trips are currently being planned for Monday, April 24, 2000. Potential field trips include looks at proposed developments in southern Nevada, translocation research areas, and nearby critical habitat.

We have reserved **The Orleans** for Friday, April 21st, through Sunday, April 23th, 1999.

The Orleans is a very nice, two year old hotel with a tremendous variety in their restaurants. The location is convenient for Las Vegas. Shuttles are available to and from the airport and other hotels.

Rooms are actually small suites with separate sitting areas. A block of rooms has been reserved for this event. Room rates range from \$49.00 (plus tax) for Thursday and Sunday nights to \$85.00 (plus tax) for rooms on Friday and Saturday nights.

The special block of rooms is limited and will not be available after March 21, 2000. DON'T PROCRASTINATE! Make your reservations now! Mention you are with the Desert Tortoise Council for these rates. For more information call Tim Duck at 435 628-7231.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. Friday, April 21st, 2000, with the first presentation beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The Orleans: located in Las Vegas, Nevada, at 4500 W. Tropicana Avenue, just across I-15 from the Strip; Reservations 1-800-ORLEANS (675-3267); (702) 365-7111; Fax (702) 365-7535; email www.orleanscasino.com.

Please join us in Las Vegas in April of 2000 and help us celebrate 25 years of tortoise science, advocacy, and conservation, and learn more about the desert tortoise.

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL EIGHTH ANNUAL DESERT TORTOISE SURVEYING, MONITORING, AND HANDLING TECHNIQUES WORKSHOP

HANDLING WORKSHOP FULL

The Council's 8th Annual Desert Tortoise Surveying, Monitoring, and Handling Workshop will be held October 23-24, 1999, in Ridgecrest, CA.

Scheduled topics include: desert tortoise ecology; finding and recognizing tortoise sign in the field; tortoise field surveys, data collection, and interpretation, and report writing; distance sampling; administering tortoise awareness briefings; guidelines for handling tortoises on construction projects; BLM's biological consultant's guide; CDFG's 2081 incidental take permit, USFWS's 10(a) (1) (b), sec. 7, biological opinion, and Sonoran tortoises in Arizona.

Outdoor demonstrations will include: field surveying; excavating burrows; handling desert tortoises and their eggs; and constructing artificial tortoise burrows.

Registration forms are available at www.deserttortoise.org or they can be mailed to you by calling (760) 375-2189.

Registration is limited to 100.

WAITING LIST SPACE IS AVAILABLE

When: 23 October, 08:00 – 18:30
24 October, 07:15 – 15:00

Where: City Hall, Council Chambers, 100 W. California Ave., Ridgecrest, California

Cost: \$75 - regular (unchanged for last five years), \$50 – student (requires endorsement of student's Advisor or Major Professor)

The Workshop is structured to provide information on handling, monitoring, and surveying for desert tortoises. This year there will be some new and some return speakers. Drs. Jeff Lovich, Kristin Berry, and Bill Boarman, of the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division (USGS) join us again to discuss the ecology of desert tortoises, and some of the threats that they face. Other return speakers include Danny Rakestraw, Dr. Alice Karl, Dr. David Morafka, Glenn Goodlett, and Gilbert Goodlett. The tentative schedule for the workshop is on the back of this notice. This year, personnel from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, California Department of Fish and Game, and Nongame, Arizona Game and Fish Department will discuss regulatory requirements. There will be time to ask questions, so be prepared. Many of the discussed documents will be included in the handbook given to each attendee.

Many techniques and methods will be discussed. You will be familiarized with how to survey for tortoises, collect and interpret data, and write reports; how to recognize tortoise sign in the field; and how to recognize disease symptoms and collect

data on unhealthy tortoises. After completing these indoor topics, we will go to the field and practice these skills: you will survey for tortoises in areas of known distributions and densities; instructors will show you how to excavate and handle tortoises, how to translocate tortoise eggs out of construction impact zones, and how to construct artificial tortoise burrows. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires that you observe authorized egg handling and burrow construction demonstrations prior to performing them. The instructors and methods have been approved by the USFWS. All attendees observing the egg handling and burrow construction demonstrations will receive a certificate documenting their participation. New techniques and topics at the workshop include distance sampling, radiographic analysis of desert tortoises, and how to administer a USFWS approved tortoise awareness briefing to construction workers.

The Desert Tortoise Council has strived to produce a workshop beneficial to both novice and expert tortoise fieldworkers and administrators. The \$75 registration cost has not changed over the past five years and this year we will introduce a student rate. Participants will receive an updated workshop handbook and an AFFTC/NASA -produced, USFWS-approved, desert tortoise preservation and awareness video. Registration fees are used exclusively to pay for the workshop costs and to accomplish the mission of the Desert Tortoise Council: *...to serve as a professional advisory group for the conservation and protection of Desert Tortoises; to support measures that will contribute to the continued survival of the species and maintenance of its habitat; to stimulate and encourage studies on the ecology, biology, management, and protection of the Desert Tortoise; to serve as a clearinghouse of information among all agencies, organizations, and individuals working with Desert Tortoises; to disseminate current Desert Tortoise information in our annual symposium proceedings [and Workshops]; to maintain an active public information and conservation education program; and to commend outstanding action and dedication by individuals and organizations promoting the objectives of the Council.*

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Desert Tortoise Council is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization that depends on the efforts of many people. Members are encouraged to participate in Council activities, including events such as the Annual Symposium and Techniques Workshop. There are variety of responsibilities that we need help with, and we try to match volunteer assistance with the needs and desires of the individual. If you are interested in doing more please contact any Officer or member of the Board of the Directors. Contact Tim Duck at 435 628-7231 or electronically at tnduck@sginet.com.

**SCHEDULE FOR DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL
EIGHTH ANNUAL DESERT TORTOISE SURVEYING,
MONITORING, AND HANDLING TECHNIQUES WORKSHOP**

When: 23 October 1999, 08:00 - 17:30, 24 October 1999, 07:30 - 15:30

Where: City Hall, Council Chambers, 100 W. California Ave., Ridgecrest, California

Cost: \$75

23 October 1999

08:00 to 08:45 *Check-in* (**Tim Duck, Glenn Goodlett, Kemp Anderson**)

08:45 to 09:00 *Welcome* (**Ed LaRue**, Circle Mountain Biological Consultants)

09:00 to 09:30 **Dr. Jeff Lovich** (U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division): *The Role of the Desert Tortoise in the Environment*

09:30 to 10:00 **Dr. Bill Boarman** (USGS, BRD): *Ravens and Roads as Threats to Tortoises*

10:00 to 10:30 Break

10:30 to 11:00 **Dr. Kristin Berry** (USGS, BRD): *Assessing Health and Normal Behaviors in Wild Desert Tortoises*

11:00 to 11:30 **Dr. Morafka** (Cal State University Dominguez Hills): *Ecology of Juvenile Desert Tortoises*

11:30 to 12:00 **Danny Rakestraw** (Science Applications International Corporation): *Tortoise Movement and Burrow Use*

12:00 to 13:15 Lunch

13:15 to 13:45 **Dr. Alice Karl** (Alice Karl and Associates): *Tortoise Field Surveys, Data Collection, Interpretation, and Report Writing*

13:45 to 14:15 **Peter Woodman** (Kiva Biological Consulting): *Finding and Recognizing Sign*

14:15 to 14:45 **Ann McLuckie** (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources): *Line Distance Sampling Methodology*

14:45 to 15:15 **Glenn Goodlett** (On-Track Consulting and Research): *Transmitter Attachment and Removal*

15:15 to 15:30 **Ed LaRue** (Circle Mountain Biological Consultants): *Instructions for Tortoise Surveys*

15:30 to 16:00 *Travel to field site*

16:00 to 18:30 *Survey of plots* (Outdoor field surveys)

24 October 1999

07:15 to 08:00 *Continental breakfast*

08:00 to 08:30 **Dr. Brian Henen** (Smithsonian Institute): *Radiography of Desert Tortoises*

08:30 to 09:00 **Gilbert Goodlett** (EnviroPlus Consulting) *Monitoring on Construction Projects*

09:00 to 09:30 **Ray Romero** (Computer Sciences Corporation): *Tortoise Awareness Training*

09:30 to 10:00 Break

10:00 to 10:30 **Tom Egan** (Bureau of Land Management): *Desert Tortoises and the Bureau of Land Management: A Biological Consultant's Guide*

10:30 to 11:00 **Ray Bransfield** (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service): *10(a) (1) (b), sec. 7, biological opinion*

11:00 to 11:30 **Becky Jones** (CA Dept. Fish and Game): *2081 Incidental Take Permit*

11:30 to 12:00 **Roy Averill-Murray** (Nongame, Arizona Game and Fish Dept.): *Sonoran Desert Tortoises in Arizona*

12:00 to 12:15 **Ed LaRue** (Circle Mountain Biological Consultants): *Instructions for handling*

12:15 to 13:30 Lunch

13:30 to 15:00 Outdoor session

Artificial Burrow Construction

Tortoise Handling

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The 25th Annual Desert Tortoise Council business Meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m., Friday, April 21, 2000, at The Orleans in Las Vegas, Nevada. Among other annual business activities, officers will be nominated and elected for several positions. All Council members are invited to attend the Business Meeting.

EXHIBITS AND VENDOR BOOTHS

Our space manager for exhibits and vendors this year is Tim Duck. Please contact Tim for rules and define your needs for space and equipment. Availability will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Register with Tim at least 30 days prior to the Symposium. Tim can be reached at (435) 628-7231 or email at tncduck@sginet.com.

SYMPOSIUM PHOTO CONTEST

Each year the Council sponsors a photo contest to honor and encourage our members to participate in educating the public through photography. Qualified winners will be awarded first, second, and third place ribbons in each category, and a Best of Show plaque will be awarded. All first place winners will receive \$25. The Best of Show winner will receive \$25.

CATEGORIES

1. Wild Desert Tortoises
2. Captive (pet) Desert Tortoises
3. Other Desert Reptiles
4. Desert Mammals
5. Other Desert Wildlife
6. Wild Desert Plants
7. Desert Scenics
8. Tortoise Conservation

We will accept mounted prints this year. Entry deadline is 12:00 noon, April 21, 2000. With the exception of Category 2, all prints must be of Wild subjects within the range of the desert tortoise. Prints may be B&W or color, but must be mounted. Each contestant may submit up to two prints per category. Photos must have been taken by the contestant and will be judged by Symposium attendees.

The category 'Tortoise Conservation' is fairly open, but should depict activities or subject matter important in the perpetuation of the species.

The back of each print must include: Category, Common and Scientific Name of Subject, Location, Date Taken, Contestant's Name, Address, and Phone Number. Contestants need not be present to receive their awards.

The Council shall have the right to use photos in its educational program, with full credit to the photographer.

NATIONAL PARK TRUST TARGETS PRIVATE LAND INSIDE MOJAVE DESERT

By Christine Dorsey
Donrey Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON -- A nonprofit trust whose mission is to purchase land to add to the National Park System is targeting more than 86,000 acres of private property inside the Mojave National Preserve.

The National Park Trust announced Wednesday it will help the federal parks agency acquire more than 200,000 acres across the country of "in-holdings" -- private or publicly owned land within national parks, including the California desert land. The eastern boundary of the Mojave preserve is 60 miles west of Las Vegas.

"It's up in the air right now," Paul Pritchard, president of the National Park Trust, said of the private tracts within the Mojave. Pritchard warned that development of the checkerboard of private in-holdings within the Mojave National Preserve would spoil the purpose for creating the preserve in 1994.

The group released a report calling the proposed private development of 200,000 acres within 20 park units in the 84 million-acre National Park System a major threat to the sanctity of America's parks.

"The danger that this land could be sold for development, bulldozing, clear-cutting or for other destructive purposes constitutes the single greatest threat to the nation's cherished system of national and state parks," Pritchard said. Presently, about 6 million acres of land within the parks is privately owned.

The Wildlands Conservancy, a California group, already has worked out an agreement with Catellus Development Corp., a real estate firm that owns most of the Mojave private in-holdings. In exchange for \$18.6 million from the conservancy and an additional \$36 million in federal funds, the real estate firm would turn over most of the environmentally sensitive land.

The rest of the property, valued at \$16.4 million, would be donated by Catellus. But there is a potential glitch in obtaining the \$36 million from the Clinton administration. Congress would have to approve a bill that would allow NPS to spend that sum from the Land and Water Conservation fund, a pot of money collected from offshore oil leases.

This summer the House and Senate approved about half of the \$295 million the Department of Interior had sought for a variety of in-holdings purchases.

The Senate has agreed to spend \$15 million on the Mojave project, less than half of the amount needed. That's still more than the House version of the bill, which includes no funding for Mojave purchases. Negotiators will meet in September to iron out differences.

If Congress does not allocate enough money this year to complete the deal with Catellus, trust officials said they will seek more next year.

David Myers, executive director of the Wildlands Conservancy, said Rep. Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., played a role in blocking funding from the House version of the bill. Myers said Lewis used his role as chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on defense to block the Mojave money until he gets funding to help nearby Fort Erwin Army Base with a proposed expansion.

Lewis' spokesman James Specht said the lawmaker does not plan to block Mojave funding when the bill is considered by House and Senate negotiators.

"His main concern is Fort Erwin," Specht said, noting Lewis will not sit on the conference panel that will consider Mojave funding. "We have to realize that the solution to this problem really is in the hands of Americans who want to see these lands protected," Pritchard said, referring to all the lands. He said the trust is hoping to spark public support, and in turn influence state and congressional lawmakers.

LETTER FROM SENATOR FEINSTEIN TO PRESIDENT CLINTON

Dianne Feinstein, California
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-0504

September 1, 1999

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton,
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, the U.S. Army is developing a plan to expand the National Training Center (NTC) at the Fort Irwin Military Reservation in the Mojave Desert in Southeastern California. One parcel of the proposed expansion, the Paradise Range, harbors the healthiest population of desert tortoises, a federally listed threatened species in California.

In 1997, the Army and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) which included several alternatives to expand the National Training Center while minimizing environmental impacts.

The Army and the Department of the Interior are currently working to develop preferred alternatives to be included in the final EIS to provide an appropriate balance between military training and species recovery in accordance with the National

Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

To date, the Army has stated that the acquisition of the Paradise Range is imperative to a successful Fort Irwin expansion. The BLM and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) continue to assert that transferring this land to the Army will pose significant threats to the desert tortoise. The BLM's recently released tortoise count and the FWS's own survey of the Mojave Desert suggests that the Superior Valley offers the best habitat for the desert tortoise. To mitigate for the significant impact on the tortoises, the Army has proposed a tortoise relocation plan. This plan would probably result in a tortoise mortality rate of about 50%, a figure that I find unacceptable.

Although I support the Army's plan to expand the NTC, I oppose doing so at the expense of a healthy desert tortoise population. I am hopeful that the Army can work with the Fish and Wildlife Services and the Bureau of Land Management to find alternative expansion plans as quickly as possible.

I hope that you will become involved in this issue and direct Secretary Babbitt and Secretary Cohen to examine possible alternatives that address the Army's need and still protect tortoises. I appreciate your support on this matter and would be happy to discuss this issue with you further at your convenience.

Sincerely yours

Dianne Feinstein

The Board of Directors of the Desert Tortoise Council wishes to thank Senator Feinstein for her efforts to protect tortoises. -Ed.

CIMA CINDER-MOJAVE NP SUIT

This week or early next week, the Western Mining Action Project and EarthLaw will file suit in the Federal District Court for Northern California against the National Park Service (NPS) for violating several laws with regard to the Cima Cinder Mine in the Mojave National Preserve.

The suit names the Regional Director and the Park Superintendent. The suit is filed on behalf of the National Parks and Conservation Association, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Citizens For Mojave National Park.

The Cima Cinder Mine, according to information provided by the miners in their patent application, mines 10,000 tons of cinders a year. The NPS states that it mines only 7,500 tons per year. In either case, this is one of the largest active mines in the entire national park system.

The Cima Cinder Mine has been mining under NPS "temporary" approval for nearly 5 years. The "temporary" approval expired in May 1996 when mine operators failed to meet two of the three NPS conditions of that temporary approval. Instead of acting to safeguard the preserve resources, critical tortoise

habitat and the Cinder Cones National Natural Landmark, the NPS let May 1996 come and go, hoping that the environmental community would look the other way.

The miners have yet to submit a complete proposed new plan of operations that shows areas to be mined and reclaimed. (Indeed, much of the site cannot be restored to original contour.) The Department of the Interior has not determined if any of the claims are valid. Yet, the NPS has stubbornly refused to respond to repeated written requests over a two-year period to fully explain the NPS actions or inaction on Cima Cinder.

In March 1999, the NPS conducted scoping to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) on the already-granted "temporary approval" for Cima Cinder. The NPS will soon release the EA.

Those who comment on the EA should point out that the NPS cannot approve any mining operations on claims in Mojave until first determining if the claims are valid. That is a provision of the California Desert Protection Act. BLM has prepared a validity determination as part of the Mineral Patent Report but the Department of the Interior has yet to confirm its conclusions.

If you comment on the EA, urge the NPS to halt the operation at Cima Cinder until:

- the Department of the Interior finds the claims valid;
- the operator submits a complete proposed plan of operations under NPS regulations at 36 CFR 9.9;
- the NPS makes the proposed plan available for public review under 36 CFR 9.14;
- the NPS reviews the proposed plan and determines if it meets the approval standards of NPS regulations at 9.10;
 - the NPS prepares an environmental assessment of the complete proposed plan for public comment;
 - the NPS concludes all necessary compliance with the Endangered Species Act and other applicable laws;
- the NPS establishes a bond amount that is sufficient to ensure compliance with an approved plan and reclamation of the site, and,
 - the operator posts the bond with the NPS.

FUNDING FOR IRWIN EXPANSION

Never let it be said that Jerry Lewis is not a tiger for what he's after. He reportedly put \$19 million for land acquisition for the Fort Irwin expansion into the unnumbered House version of S.1122. The full house committee approved the bill on July 16th, with the \$19 million in there.

Secretary Babbitt's Chief of Staff, Ken Smith reportedly met with Senator Feinstein last week or this week to discuss the situation. Unknown if Feinstein is now trying to compromise with Jerry Lewis on making something happen.

Ken Smith, his counterpart to the Secretary of the Army, Ray

Clark, and a Mr. Hambrey (Deputy to Cohen at DoD) are reportedly having meetings to try to get Fish and Wildlife to back off their current position.

Headquarters Dept. of the Army is now finalizing their position on Irwin for negotiation purposes with DOI. Supposedly the negotiations area are NOT the foot print of southern expansion, but rather "mitigation lands". Obviously, the Army does not grasp that near archival grasslands cannot be mitigated with third and fourth class lands of far less carrying capacity.

SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING OF LIVESTOCK AT MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE

In May 1999 credible reports surfaced that ranchers in the Mojave National Preserve were feeding protein supplements to cattle. Unanswered was whether such feeding was occurring with National Park Service (NPS) permission or tolerance and how it conformed with Biological Opinions and NPS permits.

* The NPS gave permission for ranchers to provide protein supplements. Unknown is whether such permission preceded the actual conduct or was after-the-fact. In any case, the NPS has approved the practice, at least orally.

* The NPS contacted Fish and Wildlife Service in Ventura, to ask if feeding protein supplements is contrary to relevant Biological Opinions (BO) and was told (June 23, 1999) that the BOs prohibit "supplemental feeding." "Supplemental feeding," to the best of his research with authors of the BO means feeding alfalfa, hay, etc. to cattle. "Feeding protein supplements" is not the same as "supplemental feeding" and is therefore not a prohibited practice. He is not certain whether feeding protein supplements helps or harms tortoises and their habitat.

* The NPS contacted Fish and Wildlife to inquire about protein supplements. However, the NPS conducted no informal or formal consultation because prohibited "supplemental feeding" was not involved.

* The NPS permits of November 1995 adopted the conditions of BLM's Full Force and Effect Grazing Decision of June 10, 1994, that contains the following: "7. Supplements such as protein blocks and salt require prior written approval. Feeding of roughage such as hay, hay cubes, or grains to supplement forage quantity, shall not be authorized in desert tortoise habitat."

* Apparently, the BLM considered protein supplements not to be prohibited (as was feeding of hay) but to be a restricted practice allowed only with prior approval.

It is very likely the ranchers fed protein supplements without the prior written approval of the NPS. That would be easy to prove. We have the date and time of eyewitness observations of protein supplements so we need only ask the NPS for its written authorization, if any, to determine the sequence.

Conclusion: We are faced with a "subtle" semantic distinction in which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service itself is a participant. While we may believe that feeding of protein supplements is a subset of "supplemental feeding," the perspective of the Service makes it difficult to advance an argument for conduct in violation of the BOs.

Instead, we have only an instance of ranchers violating a condition of their permits, of the NPS giving after-the-fact approval. We are not left with much more since Fish and Wildlife (Ray Bransfield) is saying that protein supplements are not part of prohibited supplemental feeding.

The protein supplements issue seems to be too ambiguous to be fruitful. However, the major relevant issues still remain: NPS management of grazing under its current permits; NPS compliance with NEPA when the permits are renewed or reissued in October; and NPS intentions to carry out, in whole or in part, the Recovery Plan recommendations on grazing.

Thanks to Michael Connor of the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee and Frank Buono for providing several pieces used in this newsletter.

HANDLING GUIDELINES RELEASED

The Desert Tortoise Council has recently distributed a set of *Guidelines For Handling Desert Tortoises during Construction Projects*. The Guidelines are intended for use during construction projects monitored by authorized biologists (tortoise monitors) who are working on a project in the absence of special regulatory requirements, such as a 10(a)(1)(A). Although useful information is provided, the Guidelines are not intended to replace research methodologies or biological opinion terms and conditions for handling or processing tortoises.

Ed LaRue assembled the information and drafted the original guidelines in 1994, and with input from U.S. Fish and Wildlife offices in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah, revised them in April 1996 and again in July 1999. These guidelines do not authorize individuals to handle tortoises. Such authorization should come from Federal and State wildlife resource agencies.

The Council wishes to thank the individuals who contributed for their assistance, particularly Ed LaRue for his hard work and Tierra Madre Consultants, Inc. for their commitment to this project, and for much of the funding to complete it.

The Guidelines will soon be available on the DTC website at www.deserttortoise.org

WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE TAKES A TORTOISE FROM THE DESERT

Some of us know people who have taken a tortoise from the desert. *Depending upon which state you are in, if the tortoise was collected prior to prohibitions against collecting, or if it is*

the offspring of legally obtained captives, then the owner may possess it (with a special permit in California, Nevada, and Utah). If, however, the collector has recently taken the tortoise from the desert, state and Federal laws have been violated and the collector is liable for prosecution.

If the tortoise was collected within the last few days and if it was held in isolation (e.g., in a cardboard box, no other captive tortoises or turtles present, and not placed in a yard or with any pets), then experts with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or state wildlife agency may decide that the tortoise can be returned to the location from which it was taken. You should not take the responsibility for making such a decision.

Such a determination must be made with care due to the potential to transmit the highly infectious Upper Respiratory Tract Disease and other infectious diseases. The decision on whether to return a wild tortoise to its home can only be made by designated tortoise experts. Biological expertise is essential. Tortoise experts in your area should be contacted. The Federal government or any of the states may alter their official position on this topic as more information becomes available.

If a wild tortoise has been held in captivity for more than a few days, or in the presence of another turtle or tortoise, then it must not be returned to the wild for any reason. A wild tortoise held in captivity for even a few hours is likely to have been exposed to contagious diseases. Examples of exposure include contact with tortoises or turtles carrying diseases with no outward sign of illness, or contact with yards and pens that have housed sick tortoises, even years ago.

REMEMBER: Some diseases are highly infectious and fatal. Don't take a chance on exposing wild populations.

Adapted from: *Answering Questions about Desert Tortoises: a Guide for People Who Work With The Public* (1993) by Dr. Kristin Berry

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL BYLAWS ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The business of the Desert Tortoise Council shall be managed by a Board of Directors (also referred herein as "The Board") which shall be composed of not less than 8 nor more than 15 members, 8 of which shall be the elected officers of the Council and the immediate past co-chairperson. The senior co-chairperson shall serve as board chairperson.

Section 2. Vacant Board-member positions on The Board shall be filled by appointment by a majority vote of the Board. Such appointments shall be for up to three years. Persons serving such positions may be reappointed and are subject to removal by a simple majority vote of the other Board members.

Section 3. The Board shall have control and management of the affairs and business of the organization and is authorized to act

for the Council between Annual Business Meetings. The Board shall report its interim actions to the members at the Annual Business Meeting. Any action of the Board may be overridden by a 2/3 majority vote of the attending membership at any meeting of which the general membership is notified.

Section 4. A simple majority of the existing members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum. The Board shall meet three times a year or as needed. Such meetings shall be convened by the Board chairperson or substitute only after due notice to all the Board members of such meeting. Each Board member shall have one vote and such voting may be done by written or verbal proxy. The Board may make such rules and regulations concerning its meetings as it may deem necessary.

ARTICLE V - ELECTED OFFICERS

Section 1. Co-chairpersons. There shall be two Co-chairpersons and they shall give general direction to the Council. They, together or singly, shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors. They, with the assistance of the Co-chairperson-elect, shall appoint Chairpersons of all standing and ad hoc committees and are ex-officio members of all committees.

Section 2. Co-chairperson-elect. The Co-chairperson-elect shall assist the Co-chairpersons in duties when needed. In the absence of either or both Co-chairpersons or in the event of their inability to act, the duties shall be assumed by the Co-chairperson-elect. If either Co-chairperson can not continue in office, his/her duties shall be assumed by the Co-chairperson-elect following the succession order: Co-chairman-elect; Junior Co-chairman; or Senior Co-chairman.

Section 3. Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall record the minutes of the meetings and forward same to the Corresponding Secretary within thirty (30) days.

Section 4. Corresponding Secretary. This officer shall issue notices of annual or special meetings, distribute materials to the Council's membership and others, and send out answers to correspondence as directed by the Co-chairpersons. A written report concerning the Council's activities of the previous year shall be submitted to the Co-chairpersons at the annual meeting. In the event the Co-chairpersons and the Co-chairperson-elect are unable to serve in their capacities, the Corresponding Secretary shall serve pro-tempore.

a. Files. The Corresponding Secretary shall maintain files for the Council consisting of: Bylaws, minutes of all meetings, correspondence pertinent to Council affairs, copies of all committee reports and any other material judged by the Board of Directors as pertinent.

b. Correspondence. The Corresponding Secretary shall forward copies of all correspondence to the Co-chairpersons and Co-chairperson-elect within fifteen days of receipt.

Section 5. Treasurer. This officer shall be responsible for receiving and distributing all funds of the Council. This officer shall maintain the Council's financial statements and records. A written audit of the Council's accounts for that year shall be submitted to the Co-chairpersons at the annual meeting. In the event the Co-chairpersons, Co-chairpersons-elect and Corresponding Secretary are unable to serve in their capacities, the Treasurer shall serve pro-tempore.

Section 6. Products Manager. This officer shall be responsible for maintaining an inventory of products for sale by the Desert Tortoise Council, dispensing products, collecting payment and transferring funds to the Council Treasurer. A record of all products sold and held in inventory, including net proceeds, and all costs shall be maintained and reported to the Board at the end of each calendar year. The Products Manager shall be responsible for providing to the Treasurer an accurate statement of receipts, expenditures and inventory for the purposes of filing necessary statements with the state and federal government.

Section 7. Terms of Office. All officers shall be elected at the annual meeting. However, if an officer is unable to complete his/her term of office, the Board of Directors may appoint a person to fill the vacated office until the next annual meeting.

a. Co-chairpersons. Each Co-chairperson shall serve two years such that each year the Senior Co-chairperson will retire and be replaced by the presiding Junior Co-chairperson.

b. Co-chairperson-elect. A Co-chairperson-elect shall be elected each year. That person normally shall serve the first year after election as Co-Chairperson-elect. A Co-chairperson-elect spends the two subsequent years as the Junior and then Senior Co-chairperson. A Co-chairperson may be elected to an extra year to fill a prematurely vacated position.

c. Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer. The Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected on alternate years and shall serve two-year terms. The Secretary shall be elected on even years and the Treasurer on odd years. Either officer may be reelected.

d. Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall be elected on the odd years and serve a two-year term. The person may be reelected.

e. Products Manager. The Products Manager shall be elected on even years and serve a 2-yr term. The officer may be reelected.

CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS – 2000, 25th ANNUAL MEETING AND SYMPOSIUM

The Desert Tortoise Council will host its Twenty-fifth Annual Symposium on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, April 21-23, 2000, at **The Orleans**, located in Las Vegas, Nevada, at 4500 W. Tropicana Avenue, just across I-15 from the Strip. Titles and Abstracts for Sessions or Contributed Papers and Posters are Hereby Invited. Our principal topics of interest for our Silver Anniversary Symposium are the past 25 years of conservation and scientific research efforts, the current situation regarding tortoise populations and habitats, and the future of this species. Papers are also being accepted on the biology, ecology, and physiology of desert tortoises, as well as issues related to the understanding and management of the desert habitats.

We welcome pertinent papers on turtle and tortoise biology and conservation in general and will include them if time permits.

Please return the attached form with a Proposed Title by December 1, 1999. Abstracts must follow by January 1, 2000. They should be substantive, focused on findings and implications of findings (not methods). Abstracts for 15 minute papers should be limited to 250 words (body, not title and addresses) and double-spaced. Capitalize and center the title; underneath the title, list and center all authors (include first names) with affiliations and addresses. Underline all scientific names and statistical notations. **SEND ONE COPY of the abstract** on 8 x 11.5 inch paper or virus-free 3.5 inch disk (WordPerfect or Word for Windows) or via electronic mail (kristin_berry@usgs.gov) to **Dr. Kristin Berry**, Program Chair, and a second copy to **Ann McLuckie** (nwdwr.amcluckie@state.ut.us, 2242 East 50 South, St. George, UT 84790, who will be preparing the abstracts). All email transmissions must include all the information presented below, including author's address, phone, email address and fax numbers. Email transmissions **must include the Abstract as an Attachment in WordPerfect or Word, not in the body of the text.** The Program Chair must be informed immediately if a cancellation or substitution is necessary.

PAPERS. Speakers should be prepared to give professional papers. Most papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals (12 minutes for presentation, 3 minutes for questions), unless other arrangements are made. Authors planning to publish in the *Desert Tortoise Council Proceedings* need to follow the *Guidelines for Authors* printed in this newsletter. Featured Speakers. The Keynote and Invited or Featured Speakers will be allotted additional time, to be arranged with the Program Chair. Posters. Posters will be displayed throughout the meetings. Poster presentations may be offered at specific times.

If you have questions about your paper or need assistance, please contact the Program Chair, Dr. Kristin Berry, at the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, Box Springs Field Station, via voice mail (909-697-5361 or FAX 909-697-5299 with cover sheet). Information should be exact, because the program copy will be prepared from this sheet. If your title and the speaker list is tentative, say so.

PAPER _____ STUDENT PAPER _____ POSTER _____

Author(s) and Affiliation(s). Indicate speaker with an asterisk.

Title of Paper. _____

Address of Speaker. _____

Phone (work) _____ Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Special Needs (e.g., AV equipment): _____ Time: _____

Mail to: Dr. Kristin Berry, Symposium Chair, Desert Tortoise Council, 7006 Westport Street, Riverside, CA 92506

AUTHOR GUIDELINES FOR THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL SYMPOSIUM

What to submit? Submit one copy of the manuscript (laser printer quality if possible). The copy of the manuscript should be complete, including tables, figures, etc. Include one copy of the manuscript on computer disk. The disk copy should contain text and tables if possible. Any computer text file will be fine (PC or Mac), but Microsoft Word 6.0 or older is preferred. Style and Formatting Title Page: Should include the Title, Author(s), Author(s) address, including e-mail address if available.

ABSTRACT: an abstract is required for all major papers. It should represent a concise statement of the objectives and results of the paper. Statistical results are not needed.

MAIN BODY: Manuscripts should consist of the following six sections: Introduction (no heading), Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments, Literature Cited, Tables (each on a separate page), Figure Legends (grouped together), Figures, Appendix. Submissions formatted as Shorter Communications should follow the same sequence but should not use section headings (except for Acknowledgments and Literature Cited).

IN-TEXT REFERENCES: Cite references in the text in chronological order, using a semicolon to separate citations. Use "et al." for three or more authors (e.g., Smith, 1975; Jones and Jones, 1987; Brown et al, 1990). Papers accepted for publication should be cited as Smith (in press). Unpublished manuscripts (including manuscripts submitted for publication) should be cited as Smith (unpubl. Data), and should not be placed in the Literature Cited. Be very careful that all references cite in the text (including tables and figure legends) are included in the Literature Cited.

LITERATURE CITED FORMAT: The Literature cited is one of the largest sources of errors. Please be sure that all entries in the Literature Cited are all also in the text (and vice-versa), and that the format instructions below are adhered to carefully:

Article in a Journal Smith, AT 1992. Ecology of rattlesnakes in Florida. *J. Herp.* 26:100-105.

Book Smith, AT and J. Jones. 1995. *Physiology of Amphibians and Reptiles*. McGraw-Hill Inc., New York (page numbers not needed). Note that book titles are capitalized.

Chapter in a Book Smith, AT, 1994. Systematics of frogs and toads. In J. Black and M. Lee (eds.), *Systematics of Amphibians and Reptiles*, pp. 52-65. Univ of Kansas Press, Lawrence.

Dissertation or Thesis Smith, AT 1991. Behavioral ecology of turtles. Unpubl. Ph.D. Diss (or Thesis), Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence. (Use state name if not obvious from the university name).

Multiple Citations Multiple citations for the same author should be organized as follows: single citations first, two-author citations second (in alphabetical order), three or more authors third (in chronological order).

Smith, AT, and B. Black. 1991. Systematics and morphology of snakes. *J. He rp.* 25:100-105.

Smith, AT, and J. Jones. 1989. Diamondback terrapins in Louisiana. *J. He rp.* 23:234236

Smith, AT, W. White, and J. Jones. 1989. Mating Behavior in Gila Monsters. *J. He rp.* 23:230-234

Smith, AT, A. Black, and J. Jones. 1995. Temperature relationships in garter snakes. *J. He rp.* 29:30-34.

TABLES: Tables should be double-spaced and each table should be numbered consecutively and placed on its own page. Do not use vertical lines. The legend of the table should be concise but sufficiently detailed so the table can be understood without reference to the text. Avoid footnotes whenever possible.

FIGURE HEADING: Should be placed on a single page and numbered in the order in which they are cited in the text.

FIGURES: Figures should be camera-ready when they are submitted; the editor will not redraw poor quality figures. Figures should be original drawings, laser prints, or high contrast photos. Do not submit figures printed on dot matrix or inkjet printers. Be sure that lettering will stand reduction to the final size (try reducing the figure on a copy machine prior to submission). Place your name and Figure number in pencil on the back of each figure OUTSIDE the area that will be reproduced.

ABBREVIATIONS: The following common abbreviations should be used: sec min h d wk mo yr km ml L (for liter) g N x P SD SE CV df. Please note that all measurements should be in metric units.

WHERE TO SUBMIT: Submit all materials for the Proceedings to: Ann McLuckie, 2242 E. 50 South, St. George, UT 84790

Desert Tortoise Council 25th Annual Symposium Pre-Registration
Silver Anniversary 1975 - 2000

April 20-23, 2000 in Las Vegas, Nevada

Return to: Desert Tortoise Council
1111 W. Joy Ranch Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85027

Please complete a separate form for each attendee // Please print or type

Name: _____
(First) (Last)

Organization: _____
(Name to be used on badge)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Fax: _____

SYMPOSIUM FEES

ENTER AMOUNT

Member Registration @ \$ 75.00 (\$95.00 If postmarked after 3/20/99) _____

Student Member Registration @ \$40.00 [verification required]
(\$55.00 if postmarked after 3/20/99) _____

Non-member Registration @ \$ 95.00 (\$110.00 If postmarked after 3/20/99) _____

Regular Membership Dues @ \$12.00 {see dues schedule in newsletter} _____

Banquet @ \$20.00 **Check box if Vegetarian** _____

Raffle Ticket(s)___ @ \$1.00 each _____

Total Payment Enclosed: _____

Monday Field Trip

I would like to attend the Monday, April 24th field trip YES _____ NO

JOIN US AT THE 25th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA IN APRIL 2000

Check one: MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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- Student (\$8.00 per year)
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Student memberships require endorsement of student's advisor or Major Professor

Make check or money order payable to the Desert Tortoise Council and send with this application to: Desert Tortoise Council, P.O. Box 3141, Wrightwood, California 92397