

# LARGE-SCALE TRANSLOCATION OF DESERT TORTOISES AT FORT IRWIN: ITS Team Report

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# Tasks

- *Find tortoises in Southern Expansion Area*
- *Move all healthy tortoises to Southern Translocation Area (STA)*
- *Study effect of different modes of translocation on tortoises*

# Surveys

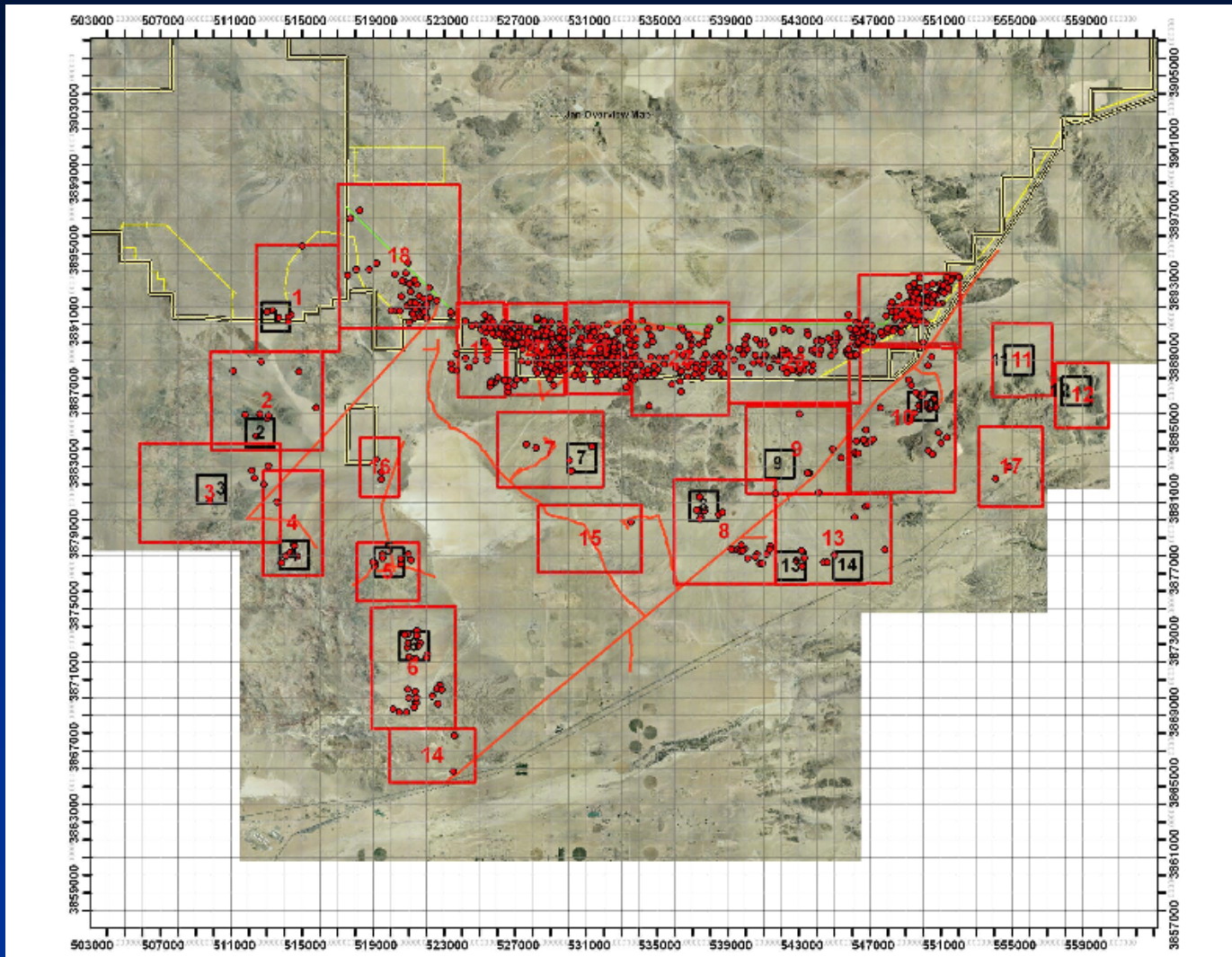
- *200% coverage*
- *Standard 10-m transects*
- *Teams of 4-6*
- *Check and mark burrows*
- *Process tortoises*
- *Attach transmitters*
- *Monthly monitoring*

# Tortoises Found on SEA

## Tortoise Numbers

	<i>est.</i>	<i>actual</i>
<i>Found:</i>	<i>450-750</i>	<i>770</i>
<i>Moved:</i>		<i>556</i>

# Distribution of Tortoises



# Find, Process, & Water



# Transported Next Morning



# Void & Wash





# Release



# Research Animals Retained Transmitters

**Translocatees - 411**

**Residents and Controls - 350**



# Research

- **Purpose: Measure response, aid recovery, inform future translocations**
- **Goals:**
  - Gauge effect on translocated and recipient tortoise populations
  - Compare translocation methods
  - Yield other valuable information for conservation of the desert tortoise



# Primary Questions

- *Dispersion*
- *Recruitment & Genetic Assimilation*
- *Reproductive Success*
- *Habitat Use and Selection*
- *Acute Stress*
- *Disease & Epidemiology*



# Translocation Comparisons

- *Hard vs. Soft Release*
- *Free-ranging vs. penned*
- *Different distances*
- *Translocatees vs Residents vs Non-residents (“controls”)*



# Successful?

- *Movements: some*
- *Reproduction: yes*
- *Initial Mortality: very little*
- *Coyote Predation:*
  - 6.5 -13% so far
  - but equal for residents, control, & translocatees
  - Challenge to translocated population
  - May compromise some research

