

Texas Tortoise Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- 1) Hire a biologist that has or can obtain a Scientific Collecting Permit from TPWD.
- 2) Texas Tortoise home range is from 5-10 acres in size. If a tortoise is located prior to ground disturbing activities, the tortoise should be moved as far from the proposed construction site as is possible, but within that 5-10 acre range.
- 3) For projects where the disturbance is concentrated (such as oil and gas drilling, wind farms, residential and commercial development) after tortoises have been removed, the entire area to be disturbed (such as roads, well pad, well, drilling fluid pits and gathering facilities) should be fenced off to exclude tortoises and other reptiles. The exclusion fence should be constructed and maintained as follows:
 - a. The exclusion fence should be constructed with metal flashing or drift fence material.
 - b. Rolled erosion control mesh material should not be used.
 - c. The exclusion fence should be buried at least 6 inches deep and be at least 24 inches high.
 - d. The exclusion fence should be maintained for the life of the project and only removed after the construction is completed and the disturbed site has been revegetated.

Any open trenches should be covered over night or inspected every morning to ensure no tortoises or other reptiles have been trapped.

- 4) For projects where the disturbance is linear (county and state roads and highways, pipelines, transmission lines) after tortoise removal, the area that will be disturbed during active construction and project specific locations should be fenced off to exclude tortoises and other reptiles. The exclusion fence should be constructed and maintained as follows:
 - a. The exclusion fence should be constructed with metal flashing or drift fence material.
 - b. Rolled erosion control mesh material should not be used.
 - c. The exclusion fence should be buried at least 6 inches deep and be at least 24 inches high.
 - d. The exclusion fence should be maintained for the life of the project and only removed after the construction is completed and the disturbed site has been revegetated.

Any open trenches should be covered over night or inspected every morning to ensure no tortoises or other reptiles have been trapped.

These BMPs are applicable to other state threatened and endangered reptile species (Texas horned lizard, Texas indigo snake, and reticulate collared lizard) that may occur in areas occupied by the Texas tortoise.