

# SONORAN PRONGHORN MONTHLY UPDATE

August 2015

## *Captive Breeding:*

### Cabeza Pen

There are 77 pronghorn in the pen; 6 fawns in north herd and 16 fawns in south herd. Pen biologists have confirmed there are 8 male and 8 female fawns in south herd.

The pen received rain from 3 small storms throughout the month totaling 1.6 inches, which has kept the pen green. There was damage on the 31<sup>st</sup>, when approximately ¾ mile of the perimeter fence was blown partially over. The Cabeza staff assisted and the pen was secured that day. Illegal alien/smuggling activity is still high in the vicinity of the pen and people were seen near the southwest corner in a wash.

A 2014 buck from north moved to south; he appears to have gone under the midline fence after a storm. The pen crew fixed the spot to prevent further movement. The bucks have been seen throughout the month chasing adult does, sparring, marking vegetation and attempting to breed.

There are five pronghorn the pen biologists are monitoring more closely. Green collar doe in north and dark blue collar doe in south are the oldest animals in the pen and appear slower and sore. Black collar buck in south's back leg was injured during the December 2014 capture. He has been seen on several occasions trying to breed the adult does, sparring with the 2014 bucks, and defending several adult does from 2014 bucks at the feeders. His body condition worsened from the beginning of the month to midmonth, but by the end of the month he showed signs of improvement. Left black #8 buck's back legs and hip appear sore, and he appears to favor his back left leg. His body condition worsened throughout the month; he was observed chasing several adult does and sparring with 2014 bucks. Grey collar doe in north's back left leg was injured at the December 2014 capture; however she is doing very well, and her body condition is good.

Cabeza Pen

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	10	Adult Females	13
Yearling Females ( <i>b</i> 2014)	5	Yearling Females ( <i>b</i> 2014)	8
Breeding Buck (from wild, L Yellow 55)	1	Breeding Buck ( <i>b</i> 2013, L Black 8)	1
Back up Buck ( <i>b</i> 2013, L Blue 52)	1	Buck ( <i>b</i> 2013, Black collar)	1
Yearling Bucks ( <i>b</i> 2014)	7	Yearling Bucks ( <i>b</i> 2014)	8
Fawns (born 2015, 5 female, 1 male)	6	Fawns (born 2015, 8 female, 8 male)	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Total Pen</b>	<b>77</b>		

### Kofa Pen

There are now at least 52 and possibly 53 pronghorn in the Kofa pen; 34 adults and yearlings and 18 or 19 fawns. At least one additional fawn has been observed recently, and there may be 2; pen biologists are still confirming how many fawns there are.

To increase genetic diversity we will release all the current adult males in the pen this year. Two of the adult bucks have been in the pen since the first animals were brought from the Cabeza Prieta pen in 2011. A third was released on Kofa in 2012 and passively trapped again in June 2013. The other buck was born in the Kofa pen in 2012.

To replace the 2015 breeding bucks, an attempt was made to passively capture several of the bucks roaming around the outside of the pen who were released on Kofa from the pen on Cabeza, and thus were not directly related to the pronghorn in the Kofa pen. On August 10 the release pen was opened to the outside and alfalfa was placed inside to encourage the bucks to enter. On August 11, 3 bucks entered the release pen, the outside gate was closed behind them, and the gates into the main pen were then opened to allow them to join the herd. Two of the 3 bucks moved into the main pen that day while observers watched and the third was seen with the herd the next morning.

We are not currently irrigating because of required maintenance to the generator and repairs to the irrigation pump mounting. We anticipate starting irrigation again soon.

Kofa Pen

Adult Females	12
Yearling Females ( <i>b</i> 2014)	11
Adult Males	7
Yearling Males ( <i>b</i> 2014)	4
Fawns (born 2015)	18-19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52-53</b>

**2014 Released Pronghorn - Cabeza:** The released pronghorn on ORPI and in the Mohawk Valley still continue to use the same general areas.

**2014 Released Pronghorn - Kofa:** The released pronghorn continue to use the same general areas. The buck on the west side of Highway 95 has remained in the same area, using a green area north of Stone Cabin. The two females near the Gila Bend Mountains have remained in the same area as well.

We had 2 mortalities of recently released pronghorn. On August 19, one of the females that had returned to the King Valley from the Palomas Plain area was found drowned in an irrigation canal west of Texas Hill. On August 27, a buck was found dead near Clancy Tank. The body had been mostly consumed by scavengers and a recent rain removed any evidence that might have led to a cause of death determination.

***Water Projects:*** Recent rains have kept most of our waters on both Cabeza and Kofa full or nearly full. Antelope Hills Tank water is dry and may have a leak; it will be investigated soon.

Damage and erosion to the Granite Mountains water was detected on a telemetry flight after a storm. AZGFD and USFWS personnel repaired the damage, re-covering the storage tanks and making a concrete overflow system to prevent erosion in future storms. While there, vehicle tracks were detected driving over the storage tanks and associated infrastructure. Hopefully whoever drove over the system in designated Wilderness did not damage the pipes and other components underground.

***Forage Enhancements:*** N/A

***Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR Herd:*** The radio-collared pronghorn are mostly using the same areas as last month. Since our last report more rain has been recorded and range conditions are good to excellent.

***Wild Pronghorn Kofa Herd (prior to 2014 releases):*** The pronghorn released on Kofa have generally been using the middle of the King Valley on Yuma Proving Ground and the southern half of the King Valley on Kofa NWR. Four fawns were seen on the last telemetry flight. Kofa/YPG has also continued to receive some rain, and conditions are still good in the areas the pronghorn are using.

***Other Projects:*** N/A

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