

SONORAN PRONGHORN MONTHLY UPDATE

July 31, 2012

Captive Breeding:

Cabeza Prieta Captive Breeding Pen

All the pronghorn in the pen are doing well. We still have 14 fawns in the north half (6 females and 8 males), and 18 fawns (10 females, 8 bucks) in the south half.

Diagnostic lab testing did not find a cause of death for the adult doe that died last month in the pen. They found no sign of any disease, and all the tissues looked normal. Cause is still unknown.

We had over 5 inches of rain at the Cabeza pen during July in several rain storms. One storm, on the evening of July 21, dumped 2.5 inches of rain on the pen in just a couple hours. This caused all the washes to run, and the larger washes ran 3-4 feet high, knocking out several sections of the main fence, and destroying large sections of the electric fence. The fence dividing the pen into north and south halves was also knocked down in several spots and irrigation pipelines were broken.

The next morning, the pen crew in Ajo was able to quickly put up some temporary snow fence across the areas where the main fence was washed away. They also were able to rebuild the main fence across the washed out areas that day. Personnel from Yuma, and from Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument came out to Ajo in the next several days to help remove debris, repair electric fences and other clean up. No pronghorn got out of the pen, and there has been no evidence of any predators getting into the pen. The pen and Child's Valley is now very green from all the rain.



Damage from the storm on the west side of the pen.



Damage along the midline fence, showing debris, missing fence, and broken irrigation pipe.

Status of Pronghorn in Cabeza Pen

June 2012

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	9	Adult Females	12
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2011)	4	Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2011)	6
Breeding Buck (Blue)	1	Breeding Buck	0
Back-up Buck	1	Back-up Buck (Yellow 3)	1
Yearling Bucks (<i>b</i> 2011)	4	Yearling Bucks (<i>b</i> 2011)	8
Fawns (born 2012, 6F, 8M)	14	Fawns (born 2012, 10F, 8M)	18
TOTAL	33	TOTAL	45
Total Pen	78		

Kofa Captive Breeding Pen

All the pronghorn in the Kofa pen are well. One of the last born twin fawns has not been seen since the first couple of days and is presumed to have died, leaving 9 fawns in the Kofa Pen (4 females and 5 males). Kofa did not get nearly as much rain as the Cabeza pen, but did get nearly 0.5 inches of rain. A few small washes ran, but no damage occurred. The pen is starting to green up, and the pronghorn are using less alfalfa.

Status of Pronghorn in Kofa Pen

	June 2012
Adult Females	6
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2011)	3
Breeding Buck	1
Back-up Buck	1
Fawns (born 2012, 4F, 5M)	9
TOTAL	20

Released Pronghorn

Most of the recently released pronghorn are either in the vicinity of the pen, or in a group to the northeast of the pen in Child's Valley. Prior to the rain, they had been using one of the the feed/water sites set up at either the east side of the pen, or further northeast in Child's Valley. With the recent rain, the entire Child's Valley area has become very green, with numerous forbs, and new succulent growth on the perennials. Pronghorn use at the feed/water sites has consequently decreased greatly.

Water Projects: The rain has added to or filled all our pronghorn waters. We are going through the necessary NEPA/cultural resource processes to build 2 new waters for pronghorn this winter – one at the experimental 1B site on South Tac, and one at the site in Child's Valley.

Forage Enhancements: The recent rains have made irrigation at Charlie Bell forage plot unnecessary. The Devils Hills forage plot did not get as much rain, and we are trying to get that site repaired so we can begin irrigation before the forage starts drying out again.

Other Projects: Nothing new to report.

Wild Pronghorn: One of the collared pronghorn using the Valley of the Ajo in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument has moved back west and is now on the Cabeza Refuge, west of Organ Pipe. The other collared pronghorn is still in the northern part of the Valley of the Ajo. Both still have one fawn. The collared female who was caught in the Tule Desert, who moved north to the Point of the Pintas area, has now moved back south, near the Fawn Hills. One the last telemetry flight, we observed 16 fawns with 22 females.