

SONORAN PRONGHORN MONTHLY UPDATE

September 2014

Captive Breeding:

Cabeza Pen

Currently there are 88 pronghorn in the pen; 28 adults and 13 fawns in north half and 33 adults and 14 fawns in south half. One female fawn was found dead in north half on September 16; cause of death could not be determined. The herds continue to graze extensively on the vast amounts of native vegetation throughout the pen; consequently their use of alfalfa has decreased dramatically. This has also caused difficulty locating animals, especially fawns, as animals are grazing in washes and thick vegetation where it is hard to identify and count individuals. The pen crew has been relying more on using the cameras by the feeders and drinkers to verify individuals who are not seen during scoping.

September 2014

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	10	Adult Females	10
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2013)	13	Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2013)	10
Breeding Buck (<i>b</i> 2010, Purple 3)	1	Breeding Buck (<i>b</i> 2010, Yellow 3)	1
Back up Buck (<i>b</i> 2011, Yel/Blk 3)	1	Breeding Buck (<i>b</i> 2012, Grn/Wht 3)	1
Yearling Bucks (<i>b</i> 2013)	3	Adult Bucks (<i>b</i> 2010, 2012)	3
Fawns (born 2014)	13	Yearling Bucks (<i>b</i> 2013)	8
		Fawns (born 2014)	14
TOTAL	41	TOTAL	47
Total Pen	88		

Another 1.25+ inches of rain fell on the night of September 27 at the pen. The pen and surrounding areas including Charlie Bell forage plot, East Release and Morgart tank are very green with ample forbs and other native forage.

Kofa Pen

There are 31 pronghorn in Kofa pen including 15 fawns. The pen crew has recently verified another additional female fawn that somehow escaped detection until now in the pen. The Kofa pen has not received nearly as much precipitation as the Cabeza pen and the pen crew is starting to irrigate the native forage in the pen.

	September 2014
Adult Females	11
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2013)	1
Adult Males	3
Yearling Males (<i>b</i> 2013)	1
Fawns (born 2014, 11 females, 4 males)	15
TOTAL	31

2013 Released Pronghorn - Cabeza:

The pronghorn released on ORPI have continued to use the Valley of the Ajo, and have recently been near the northern border of ORPI. The male that returned from the Tohono O'odham reservation has rejoined the herd in the Valley of the Ajo. We recently documented the deaths of two of these released pronghorn on ORPI. A doe was heard on mortality on the September 28 telemetry flight; subsequent investigation found nothing remaining but the collar. Cause of death is unknown. On the same flight, a buck was located but not seen in the same area as the flight 2 weeks prior when he was also not seen. His collar was not on mortality, but we have been experiencing problems with the mortality signal on some of the most recent collars. Investigation on October 1 revealed he was also dead. His body was found, but the amount of time (2+ weeks) that had passed since his likely death made determining cause of death impossible.

The four pronghorn released on BMGR-West have remained in the same general areas as previously reported. The two bucks that were released near the captive breeding pen have been using Child's Valley and the tactical ranges on BMGR.

2013 Released Pronghorn - Kofa: The pronghorn released on Kofa are still being seen in two general areas. Four males are generally in the vicinity of the pen. The other 4 that had been around the pen (2 females, 1 fawn, 1 male) have moved further south in King Valley and joined up with the other groups of pronghorn. The other pronghorn are generally found on the north part of YPG or the southern King Valley. We still believe there are 10 fawns with the wild herd on Kofa. The habitat is still green with available forage in the washes, but is drying out on the flats between the washes.

Water Projects: USFWS and AGFD personnel did maintenance on Antelope Tank water on September 10. The trough gradually over time floated out of the ground and the dam was covered with debris. Personnel re-fitted the trough in the ground and anchored it so it could not come out again, and cleaned the dam. The storage tanks were full from rain, so the water is now functioning as intended.

Forage Enhancements: All the forage plots are exceptionally green with the recent rains; consequently we are not irrigating any.

Other Projects/Personnel: Nothing new to report.

Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR herd: On the last telemetry flight, the pronghorn were spread out over most of the range. Much of the range is still very green including ORPI, the Tactical Ranges, Childs Valley, northern Tule Desert, Mohawk Valley and northern Growler Valley. There are some areas, particularly southern Growler Valley, and southern San Cristobal Valley that don't appear to have received much rain and are relatively dry.