

SONORAN PRONGHORN MONTHLY UPDATE

July 28, 2011

Captive Breeding:

Overall, the pronghorn in the pen are doing well. However, we found a doe fawn in the north half dead on July 6. She had been dead for a few days, and cause of death could not be determined.

It rained over ½ inch at the pen, and over 1 inch at Charlie Bell forage plot between July 3-5. The pen has greened up and the pronghorn are feeding more on native vegetation, however alfalfa consumption is still high.

We installed a gate in the midline fence (between the north and south halves of the pen) to provide access for the breeding buck to potentially move back into the south half of the pen. However, he has not shown any interest in the females in the south half and has therefore not been anywhere near the gate.

Status of Pronghorn in Pen

(M = Male, F = Female)

	Wild pronghorn put into the pen	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total in Pen
NORTH HALF									
In Pen	3F	1F		1F	2F	3F	7F, 4M	6F, 4M	
Released	1M	4M, 1F	3M	4M, 2F	5M, 2F	5M, 5F			
From south half					2M			1 F fawn	
To south half					1M				34
SOUTH HALF									
In Pen	4F			1F	1F	4F	10F, 7M	6F, 8M	
Released			2F, 2M	1F, 2M	2F, 8M	2F, 8M			
From north half					*				
To north half					1M				41
* buck moved himself from south to north									75

Released Pronghorn: With the rain in Child's Valley, the released pronghorn are making short forays away from the pen, but still return to feed on the alfalfa. The released females are generally in one group, and the bucks are generally in pairs or singles.

The buck fawn that was with one of the released females has not been seen for several weeks. The pen monitors observed his mother chasing a coyote one morning, and the fawn has not been seen since then; he was likely killed by a coyote. None of the 9 females released last winter recruited any fawns this spring. Poor forage conditions and known coyote predation are likely the causes.

Water Projects: Our automatic cameras at Devils Hills water have documented a herd of 11 pronghorn, including 3 fawns (2 female, 1 male) using the water. They are photographed there almost daily. Two bucks released in 2009 are with this herd.

Forage Enhancements: We have not been irrigating at Charlie Bell forage plot since the rain. It has greened up and several pronghorn have been documented using it. We still have an electrical problem with the pump/well at Granite Mountains forage plot and cannot irrigate until we get that fixed.

Other Projects: We have planned the KOFA captive breeding pen design and infrastructure and flagged the perimeter. We have begun the process of getting a fence contractor to build the pen. We are also working on getting a well driller to drill a well. We are purchasing materials for the irrigation and waters in the pen.

Wild Pronghorn: Other than the 14 collared animals released this year who are near the pen, we only have 4 other radio collars in the wild herd. Two are usually seen on the Tactical Ranges. One is with the herd near Point of the Pintas, and the other is seen in the San Cristobal Valley, often with 1 or 2 males released in 2009. The rain was very limited and sporadic over pronghorn range, and most areas are still dry.



Pronghorn at Devil's Hills water, July 8, 2011, with two fawns. Automatic camera