

**Panther #74 Killed on US 27 in Highlands County  
September 1999**

Panther #74 was struck and killed by a vehicle on US 27 in Highlands County approximately ½ mile north of CR 731 near Venus during the late night or early morning hours of 7-8 September. Massive injuries were sustained and death was almost certainly instantaneous. He had recently dispersed to the Fisheating Creek area near Palmdale and seemed to be setting up a regular home range which encompassed US 27. He had been using this area approximately four months prior to his early demise at two years of age.

Panther #74 was likely born the summer of 1997 on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation to panther #73<sub>F1</sub>. Panthers #73<sub>F1</sub> and #74 were found together and collared on 12 November 1998. It is suspected that male #74 is one of #73<sub>F1</sub>'s three offspring. Shortly after his capture, #74 began exhibiting dispersal behavior and by February 1999 had left his natal range. Over the weekend of 8-9 May, 1999 he swam across the Caloosahatchee River near the Ortona Lock and Dam near Goodno. He was the second male panther documented to disperse north of the Caloosahatchee River within the past year (panther #62 crossed in April 1998). He had been using the Fisheating Creek system and other areas north of the Creek but remained south of SR 70. He regularly crossed US 27 as he traveled in his new range.