

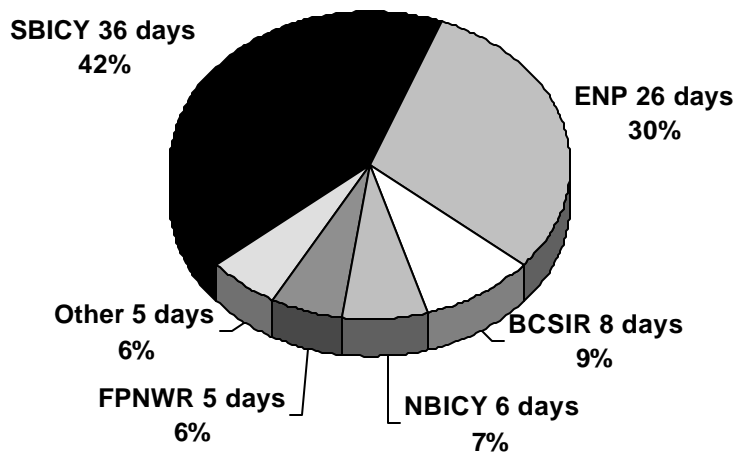
SUMMARY OF THE FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S 1999-2000 PANTHER CAPTURE SEASON

This report briefly summarizes the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) 1999-2000 panther capture season activities. This summary does not include data collected prior to December 1999 or subsequent to May 2000. These data along with a more detailed summary of the activities described hereafter will be provided in the FWC's annual report on *Florida Panther Genetic Restoration and Management*.

Our capture efforts began 06 December 1999 and continued through 09 May 2000. We captured 21 panthers and 4 Texas cougars during the study period. We recollared 4 panthers and 2 Texas cougars, captured and recollared 2 panthers and 2 Texas cougars whose transmitters had failed, captured and recollared 1 panther whose radiocollar had fallen off, and added 15 new panthers to our radiocollared sample (Table 1). As of 31 May 2000, we have 37 panthers and 4 Texas cougars radiocollared (Table 2). However, four of these panthers (FP56, FP57, FP66_{F1}, and FP70_{F1}) have radiocollars that are no longer functioning. Seventeen of the radiocollared panthers are first- or second-generation progeny of Texas cougars.

We devoted the majority (72%) of our capture effort in Big Cypress National Preserve south of I-75 (SBICY) and in Everglades National Park (ENP) (Figure 1). The primary focus of our efforts in these areas was the capture and radiocollaring of dependent-aged kittens of Texas cougars and their progeny. The remainder of our effort was divided almost equally among the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR), Big Cypress National Preserve north of I-75 (NBICY), and the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge (FPNWR). We also conducted captures in Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve (FSSP), Picayune Strand State Forest (PSSF), and Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest (OSSF).

1999-2000 Panther Capture Effort (Hunt-Days)



The primary objective of our capture work this season was the capture and radiocollaring of first- or second-generation progeny of Texas cougars. We were extremely successful in accomplishing this along with other tasks, especially given that our efforts were hampered by an unusual number of radiocollar failures. Fifteen dependent-aged kittens of Texas cougars or their progeny were identified as capture priorities for the 1999-2000 season. We captured and radiocollared 9 of these kittens, 3 are known alive but were not captured, and evidence supports that the remaining 3 have died. We also captured and radiocollared a previously undocumented dependent-aged male kitten of FP73_{F1} (FP84_{B-FL}). Therefore, we captured and radiocollared 10 of 13 (77%) known surviving dependent-aged kittens of Texas cougars and their progeny. As of 31 May 2000, 5 of these radiocollared offspring (FP83_{F1}, FP84_{B-FL}, FP85_{B-FL}, FP87_{B-FL}, and FP93_{B-TX}) had dispersed. FP84_{B-FL} died in April 2000 after dispersing across the Caloosahatchee River to Fisheating Creek in Glades County.

A second objective of our capture work this season was recollaring panthers or Texas cougars either scheduled for collar replacement or because of radiocollar failures. Ten cats were scheduled for recollaring prior to the start of the 1999-2000 capture season. We recollared 8 of these cats, 1 panther (FP63) died, and we did not replace the failed radiocollar on FP70_{F1}. We succeeded in recapturing and replacing failed radiocollars on FP55, FP61_{F1}, FP73_{F1}, TX107, and TX108. Additionally, we successfully implanted TX107 with a contraceptive and replaced the contraceptive implant in TX101. TX101 died of unknown causes in March 2000.

During the capture season, we handled litters of FP66_{F1} and FP78. Panther FP66_{F1} denned in December 1999 on private land north of the FPNWR and we documented 3 kittens (K76♂, K77♀, and K78♀). K76 died from vehicular trauma in February 2000. Panther FP78 denned in April 2000 on the FPNWR and we documented 2 kittens (K79♀ and K80♂). Additionally, FP75 denned in March 2000 on private land. However, we were not granted property access to document the litter. This den was abandoned by FP75 for unknown reasons approximately 1 month later.

Six radiocollared panthers, 1 dependent-aged kitten of FP66_{F1}, and 1 uncollared panther died during the capture season (Table 3). FP16, TX101, and FP84_{B-FL} died of unknown causes in ENP (January 2000), BCSIR (March 2000), and Fisheating Creek (April 2000), respectively. FP63, K76, and UFP34 died from vehicular trauma on State Road 29 (January 2000), County Road 858 (February 2000), and on County Road 846 (March 2000), respectively. FP68 was killed by an uncollared panther in the Addition Lands of NBICY (March 2000).

**Prepared by: David Shindle, FWC
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Table 1. Florida panthers and Texas cougars handled during the 1999-2000 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's capture season (December 1999 – May 2000).

Cat ID ^a	Sex	Capture Date	Capture Location ^b	Comments
TX108	F	14 Dec 1999	ENP	Replaced failed radiocollar
K76	M	24 Dec 1999	Private Land	Kitten of FP66 _{F1} , died 28 Feb 2000
K77	F	24 Dec 1999	Private Land	Kitten of FP66 _{F1}
K78	F	24 Dec 1999	Private Land	Kitten of FP66 _{F1}
TX101	F	10 Jan 2000	BCSIR	Replaced contraceptive implant and radiocollar; died 31 Mar 2000
FP73 _{F1}	F	10 Jan 2000	BCSIR	Replaced dropped radiocollar
FP80	F	14 Jan 2000	BCSIR	First capture, died 10 Feb 2000
FP81	M	14 Jan 2000	BCSIR	First capture
TX106	F	21 Jan 2000	PSSF	Replaced radiocollar
FP32	F	24 Jan 2000	FPNWR	Replaced radiocollar
FP82	F	25 Jan 2000	OKSSF	First capture
FP49	F	01 Feb 2000	NBICY	Replaced radiocollar
FP83 _{F1}	F	08 Feb 2000	FSSP	First capture, TX106's kitten; dispersed
FP84 _{B-FL}	M	11 Feb 2000	BCSIR	First capture, FP73 _{F1} 's kitten; died 21 Apr 2000
FP85 _{B-FL}	M	17 Feb 2000	ENP	First capture, FP61 _{F1} 's kitten; dispersed
FP61 _{F1}	F	17 Feb 2000	ENP	Replaced failed radiocollar
FP86 _{F2}	F	21 Feb 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP71 _{F1} 's kitten
FP83 _{F1}	F	24 Feb 2000	PSSF	Replaced radiocollar
FP87 _{B-FL}	F	28 Feb 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP55's kitten; dispersed
FP88 _{F2}	F	02 Mar 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP70 _{F1} 's kitten
FP89	M	02 Mar 2000	SBICY	First capture
FP90 _{F2}	F	08 Mar 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP71 _{F1} 's kitten
FP55	F	09 Mar 2000	SBICY	Replaced failed radiocollar
FP91 _{F2}	F	17 Mar 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP70 _{F1} 's kitten
FP92 _{F2}	M	06 Apr 2000	SBICY	First capture, FP70 _{F1} 's kitten
FP93 _{B-TX}	F	10 Apr 2000	SBICY	First capture, TX107's kitten; dispersed
TX107	F	19 Apr 2000	SBICY	Implanted contraceptive; replaced failed radiocollar
K79	F	26 Apr 2000	FPNWR	Kitten of FP78
K80	M	26 Apr 2000	FPNWR	Kitten of FP78
FP94 _{F1}	F	01 May 2000	ENP	First capture, TX105's kitten
FP75	F	09 May 2000	NBICY	Replaced radiocollar

^aFP denotes panthers captured for radiocollaring; K denotes kittens handled at panther or Texas cougar dens; TX denotes Texas cougars used for Panther Genetic Restoration; F1 subscript denotes Florida panther x Texas cougar offspring; F2 subscript denotes offspring of F1 x F1 mating; B-FL subscript denotes offspring of F1 x Florida panther mating; B-TX subscript denotes offspring of F1 x Texas cougar mating.

^bENP = Everglades National Park; BCSIR = Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; PSSF = Picayune Strand State Forest; FPNWR = Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge; OKSSF = Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest; NBICY = Big Cypress National Preserve north of Interstate 75; FSSP = Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve; SBICY = Big Cypress National Preserve south of Interstate 75.

Table 2. Status of radio-collared Florida panthers and Texas cougars as of 31 May 2000.

Cat ID ^a	Sex	Location ^b	Last Collaring	Comments
FP11	F	Private Lands	08 Jan 1998	Last recollaring
FP23	F	SBICY	23 Feb 1999	Last recollaring
FP32	F	FPNWR	24 Jan 2000	Last recollaring
FP48	F	NBICY	09 Jan 1998	Recollar 2000-01
FP49	F	NBICY	01 Feb 2000	
FP54	M	FSSP	02 Feb 1998	Recollar 2000-01
FP55	F	SBICY	09 Mar 2000	
FP56	F	NBICY	07 Mar 1997	Collar out 23 Feb 1998
FP57	F	FSSP	29 Jan 1998	Collar out 07 Apr 2000
FP59	M	FPNWR/Private	11 Feb 1999	
FP60	M	FSSP/FPNWR	09 Mar 1999	
FP61 _{F1}	F	ENP	17 Feb 2000	
FP62	M	Polk/Oceola Co.	25 Mar 1998	Recollar 2000-01
FP65 _{F1}	M	OK Slough	08 Mar 1999	
FP66 _{F1}	F	Private Lands	09 Dec 1997	Collar out 01 May 2000; 2 ♀ kittens
FP67	F	Private Lands	04 Jan 1999	
FP69	F	NBICY	15 Aug 1998	Recollar 2000-01
FP70 _{F1}	F	SBICY	25 Feb 1998	Recollar 2000-01 , Collar out 24 Jan 2000
FP71 _{F1}	F	SBICY	05 Mar 1998	Recollar 2000-01
FP73 _{F1}	F	BCSIR	10 Jan 2000	
FP75	F	NBICY/Private	09 May 2000	
FP77	F	NBICY/BCSIR	22 Jan 1999	
FP78	F	FPNWR	16 Feb 1999	1 ♀, 1 ♂ kitten
FP79 _{F1}	M	SBICY	03 Mar 1999	
FP81	M	Private/BCSIR	14 Jan 2000	
FP82	F	OK Slough	25 Jan 2000	
FP83 _{F1}	F	FPNWR	24 Feb 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP85 _{B-FL}	M	ENP	17 Feb 2000	Check collar fit 2000-01
FP86 _{F2}	F	SBICY	21 Feb 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP87 _{B-FL}	F	SBICY	28 Feb 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP88 _{F2}	F	SBICY	02 Mar 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP89	M	SBICY	02 Mar 2000	
FP90 _{F2}	M	SBICY	08 Mar 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP91 _{F2}	F	SBICY	17 Mar 2000	Recollar 2000-01
FP92 _{F2}	M	SBICY	06 Apr 2000	Check collar fit 2000-01
FP93 _{B-TX}	F	SBICY	10 Apr 2000	
FP94 _{F1}	F	ENP	01 May 2000	Check Collar Fit 2000-01
TX105	F	ENP	01 Dec 1997	Recollar 2000-2001
TX106	F	FPNWR/FSSP	21 Jan 2000	
TX107	F	SBICY	19 Apr 2000	Implanted with contraceptive
TX108	F	ENP	14 Dec 1999	

^aFP denotes panthers captured for radiocollaring; K denotes kittens handled at panther or Texas cougar dens; TX denotes Texas cougars used for Panther Genetic Restoration; F1 subscript denotes Florida panther x Texas cougar offspring; F2 subscript denotes offspring of F1 x F1 mating; B-FL subscript denotes offspring of F1 x Florida panther mating; B-TX subscript denotes offspring of F1 x Texas cougar mating.

^bENP = Everglades National Park; BCSIR = Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; FPNWR = Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge; OK Slough = Okaloacoochee Slough; NBICY = Big Cypress National Preserve north of Interstate 75; FSSP = Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve; SBCICY = Big Cypress National Preserve south of Interstate 75.

Table 3. Florida panther and Texas cougar mortalities documented during the 1999-2000 capture season (December 1999 – May 2000).

Cat ID ^a	Sex	Date	Location	Cause
FP16	M	07 Jan 2000	ENP	Unknown
FP63	M	17 Jan 2000	State Road 29	Vehicular trauma / drowning
FP80	F	10 Feb 2000	BCSIR	Vehicular trauma
K76	M	28 Feb 2000	County Road 858	Vehicular trauma
FP68	M	03 Mar 2000	NBICY	Intraspecific aggression
UFP34	M	23 Mar 2000	County Road 846	Vehicular trauma
TX101	F	31 Mar 2000	BCSIR	Unknown
FP84 _{B-FL}	M	21 Apr 2000	Fisheating Creek WMA	Unknown

^aFP denotes panthers captured for radiocollaring; K denotes kittens handled at panther or Texas cougar dens; UFP denotes uncollared Florida panthers, typically roadkills; TX denotes Texas cougars used for Panther Genetic Restoration; B-FL subscript denotes offspring of F1 x Florida panther mating.

^bENP = Everglades National Park; BCSIR = Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; NBICY = Big Cypress National Preserve north of Interstate 75; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.