

South Florida Deer Research Project Quarterly Update

October – December 2017

Survival Monitoring

- During this quarter, we investigated 8 (5 females, 3 males) deer mortalities.
- The mortalities were categorized as panther predation events and one unknown predator. In some instances, we cannot definitively eliminate the possibility of scavenging, and the causes of all mortality data should be considered preliminary until all reviews are completed.
- One collar (male) stopped communicating during this period.
- We currently have 75 deer radio-collared.
- We continue to compile and process GPS collar data. To date, we have 587,524 locations of individual deer.

Camera Trapping

- We continued to monitor the 180 cameras in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and Big Cypress National Preserve.
- Each camera trap was visited at least three times during the quarter to download data and to maintain the trap site (i.e., clear vegetation, replace batteries, and exchange any malfunctioning cameras).
- During this quarter, we have processed and catalogued 9,011 images. To date, we have processed and catalogued 452,896 images by species or group (Addition Lands 134,679; Bear Island 150,871; FPNWR 167,346).

Additional Notes

- The South Florida Deer Study camera survey part is ending after this quarter. Cameras will be pulled from the Bear Island and North Addition Lands units, while the FL Panther National Wildlife Refuge cameras will remain in field for the time being. All the deer that are still collared will continue to be monitored throughout 2018 and mortality investigations will continue as needed.
- The South Florida Deer Team gave 3 presentations at The Wildlife Society Meeting, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The 2017 wet season was one of the rainiest wet seasons on record for Big Cypress National Preserve, surpassing the 1995 record wet season by 7 inches. Luckily water levels have receded during this past quarter, but below is a series of photos taken during hurricane Irma demonstrating just how quickly those water levels came up.

