Interagency Florida Panther Response Team

Annual Report: 2015-2016

(July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Park Service

INTRODUCTION

An Interagency Florida Panther Response Team (Response Team) was established by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 2004 to respond to human-panther interactions. The Response Team developed the Interagency Florida Panther Response Plan (Response Plan) to provide guidelines for responding to human-panther interactions and conflicts. Also included in the plan is an outreach strategy that provides goals and objectives for educating the public. The Response Plan has been the guiding document for the Response Team since February 2005. An Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Response Plan was finalized in October 2008. The Environmental Assessment and Response Plan (Appendix C of EA) is available for download at http://www.fws.gov/verobeach/MammalsPDFs/R4FWSPantherEAFinal.pdf?spcode=A008.

The Response Plan requires that the Response Team meet at least once a year to review the past year's activities and suggest revisions to the Response Plan, if needed. The results of the annual meeting are provided in a comprehensive report to the **Oversight Committee** consisting of the:

- FWS Southeast Regional Director
- FWS Project Leader of the Southwest Florida Gulf Coast Refuges
- NPS Southeast Regional Director
- NPS Superintendent of Everglades National Park (ENP)
- NPS Superintendent of Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP)
- FWC Executive Director.

The Oversight Committee will review and approve revisions to the Response Plan, review actions by the Response Team and provide guidance if warranted.

The Annual Interagency Response Team Meeting was held on 9 November, 2016 to review significant human-panther interactions that occurred during the reporting period and discuss/recommend potential Response Plan revisions for consideration by the Oversight Committee.

NOTE: Future reports will be based on a calendar year rather than the State fiscal year. The next report will include events from 1 July 2016 through 30 December 2017.

HUMAN-PANTHER INTERACTIONS AND DEPREDATIONS

The Response Plan identifies five human-panther interaction classifications: Sighting(s), Encounter, Incident, Threat, and Attack. Panther depredation (preying on domestic animals) is addressed separately because it does not involve direct interaction with a human. Definitions, associated panther behaviors, risk factor, and Team response of each interaction type are detailed in the Response Plan (available through the link provided in the Introduction). **Only those interactions and/or depredations where physical evidence of panther activity was found and that occurred within the fiscal year of this report will be summarized below.** All interactions and depredations investigated by the Response Team during the reporting period are listed in Appendix I.

An interaction or depredation is tallied when physical evidence, examined by experienced personnel knowledgeable in interpreting panther sign, supports that a panther was involved. Four encounters and 23

panther depredations contained physical evidence to support a panther was involved during this reporting period (Fig. 1). There were no incidents, threats or human attacks. Ten additional depredations were investigated but no physical evidence of panther activity was found. A bobcat, coyotes and dogs were responsible for six depredations (Table 1).

Encounters

An encounter is an unexpected direct meeting between a human and a panther. Encounters pose a low to moderate risk factor and vary depending on proximity and behavior of both the panther and the person involved. Reported encounters were investigated within 24 hours, an attempt was made to determine the cause of the encounter, and an assessment was submitted to the Response Team. Four encounters occurred during the reporting period (Table 2, Fig. 2).

- The first involved a juvenile panther that was found outside of a lanai in the corner where it joined the house. After biologists determined the panther was uninjured, they gently encouraged it to stand up and it moved away exiting the property.
- The second involved a person that walked towards the back of their property to retrieve their dog who was not responding to being called. As the person got closer to their dog, they saw the panther standing near a deer it had recently killed. The panther retreated as the person approached.
- The third involved two people that were told that a panther was ahead of them on the boardwalk at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary yet they continued to walk in the direction of the panther. As they neared the panther, the cat hesitated then ran by the pair. This encounter was captured on video by the people involved.
- The last involved a juvenile panther that entered a lanai through an open pet door. After several minutes of trying to get through the screen, it exited through the same pet door.

Depredations

A depredation is classified as domestic livestock or pets being preyed upon by a panther. Because depredations do not involve direct contact with humans, they pose a low risk to human safety. Physical evidence of panther presence or activity was found at twenty-three depredation events (some events involved multiple prey animals) in Collier, Hendry, and Lee Counties (Table 3). The majority of these involved hobby farm livestock ("backyard" animals such goats, sheep, etc.) or pets in the Golden Gate Estates subdivision east of Naples but depredations also occurred in rural areas near Copeland, Felda, and Immokalee (Fig. 3). Goats accounted for the majority of hobby livestock losses but other animals included sheep, calves, dogs, and a duck (Table 4). Additionally, one depredation was caused by a bobcat, three by coyotes, and two by dogs (Table 1).

Efforts continued on minimizing hobby-livestock panther depredations this fiscal year by educating citizens on proper husbandry practices and resources available for assistance. After a depredation event, packets of information were delivered door-to-door to residents within 1-mile of the event location alerting them of the recent activity. Packets contained a notice about recent wildlife activity in the neighborhood, the *A Guide to Living With Florida Panthers* brochure, information on reporting panther sightings to the panther sightings web site, the Defenders of Wildlife safety pen assistance program, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida pen assistance and cattle compensation programs, and a handout on obtaining the Defenders of Wildlife booklet *Florida Panther: A Guide to Recognizing the Florida Panther, It's Tracks and Sign*. Additionally, because bears are active in many of the same areas, the *A*

Guide to Living in Bear Country brochure and tips on avoiding attracting bears were also included. Literature was delivered to 529 residences near affected areas. Packets were not redelivered in areas recently canvassed.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Some interactions require the Response Team to take action to resolve a situation for the benefit of human or panther safety. The responding Response Team members will evaluate the situation and submit an assessment to the Response Team via email. If necessary, the Response Team shall coordinate resources among all affected agencies and develop an action plan. Certain situations warrant immediate action, before the Response Team can formally be apprised, for a prudent and successful outcome.
Four events required management action: Two panthers were captured and placed in captive management facilities, one was relocated (ultimately removed after the end of this reporting period), and assistance was provided to encourage one panther to safety.

- On 19 October 2015 FWC received a report late in the evening that a juvenile panther was lying down next to a house near the lanai on 29th St NW in Golden Gate Estates (Fig. 4). The residents' cats alerted them to its presence. The panther, estimated to be about 5-mo-old, had been on scene for about an hour when FWC panther team biologists arrived. The panther's health and condition were assessed and, seeing no apparent injuries or cause for concern, the juvenile was simply coaxed to get up and leave the area.
- On 2 November 2015 an approximately 4-mo-old kitten, UCFP253, was captured in Collier Seminole State Park. Its mother, UCFP251, had been struck and killed by a vehicle 3 weeks earlier on 8 October. A sighting of this family group (Fig. 5) taken by park personnel on 6 October indicated there were 3 kittens. One of the kittens (UCFP252) was found deceased on 30 October. The remaining kitten was observed on 4 November but capture efforts were unsuccessful. Because of her young age UCFP253 was not a suitable candidate for rehabilitation and release and was placed in captive management. She was initially maintained at the Naples Zoo until being permanently placed at the Palm Beach Zoo on 9 February 2016.
- On 18 January 2016 workers at the Sakata Research Station (Sakata Seed Corporation) in Ft. Myers discovered a 3-mo-old kitten (UCFP261) in one of the agriculture fields, captured it, and called FWC. Limited natural areas and the unknown location of its mother precluded efforts to successfully reunite the kitten with its mother. Due to its young age it was not a suitable candidate for rehabilitation and release and was placed in captive management. UCFP261 was maintained at the Naples Zoo until being permanently placed at the Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park on 5 July 2016.
- Between January and mid-April 2016, a young male panther was frequenting Farmworker Village near Immokalee. Reports of sightings, encounters and depredations occurred during this time period. The Response Team held several conference calls and developed an Action Plan (App. II) to manage this situation. On 12 April 2016 the panther was captured at Farmworker Village in an attempt to alter his behavior. This panther (FP243) was temporarily quarantined at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo due to concerns regarding the potential of feline leukemia (FeLV) infection before being released 50 miles away on Big Cypress National Preserve south of US41 on 25 May 2016.
- Shortly after release, FP243 began moving northward crossing US41 and I-75 through Big Cypress National Preserve. Due to the timing of this event relative to the end of this reporting period, details of FP243's removal from the wild will be in next year's report. However, the complete Action Plan is included as Appendix II.

Updates on Management Actions taken during FY 14-15

- On 11 October 2014 an injured panther, UCFP221, was rescued from the side of Immokalee Rd. in Collier County approximately 1.4 miles east of Oil Well Grade Rd. Initial reports indicated the panther had been struck by a vehicle but it was later learned that the panther had been shot twice and was blinded by bird shot which resulted in his emaciated condition. UCFP221 received initial care at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo before being transferred to his permanent home at The Naples Zoo in December 2014. UCFP221 (a.k.a "Uno" because he was the first patient at Lowry Park Zoo's new hospital facility) was debuted to the public in a newly constructed exhibit on 18 July 2015. The criminal case remains unsolved.
- On 3 February 2015 FP238 was captured in a Port Royal neighborhood near Gordon's Pass in Naples, fitted with a GPS radiocollar, and relocated to Picayune Strand State Forest. Within a week FP238 returned to Rookery Bay National Estuarine Reserve where it's suspected he initially came from. In May 2015 FP238 began an eastward trek staying south of US41 in the mangroves and reached Everglades National Park (ENP) by June. The GPS portion of his collar failed on 11 July 2015 but FP238 was tracked via VHF until that failed on 2 October 2015. FP238, identified by the type of radiocollar he was wearing, was subsequently captured on a trail camera in the Turner River unit of Big Cypress National Preserve in mid May 2016.

OUTREACH

The Florida Panther Outreach Working Group, comprised of state and federal government agencies and non-government organizations, was created in 2006 to develop and promote various types of outreach materials based on the Response Plan's Outreach Strategy. Teleconference meetings were held monthly. Outreach efforts accomplished during the past fiscal year are summarized below.

- FWC's Private Lands Panther Biologist gave multiple presentations throughout the year to groups ranging from youth summer camps, local environmental groups, and private landowners. Topics ranged from panther ecology, living with panthers, and landowner incentive programs. Over 400 people were reached at these various events.
- The quarterly *Panther Update* newsletter, produced by the Friends of the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge (FPNWR), includes stories from the field as well as other interesting facts about panthers. Three newsletters were published during the reporting period and disseminated to over 400 email recipients and posted on several websites.
- The annual Save the Panther Day was recognized on 19 March 2016 through a Collier County Board of Commissioner's resolution that was developed by the Defenders of Wildlife, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, and Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge. This resolution coincides with the Governor's proclamation that occurs on the third Saturday of each March. The FPNWR hosted an Open House event that attracted over 200 people to commemorate Save the Panther Day.
- A community workshop focused on preventing wildlife conflicts was held on 21 November 2015 in lieu of the Florida Panther Festival. The workshop, organized by wildlife and conservation agencies, NGOs, and the Collier 4H program, was held at the UF/IFAS Collier County Extension Office in Golden Gate Estates and attracted a targeted audience of about 50 people. Hands-on

demonstrations provided attendees with practical experience to resolve and prevent their own wildlife conflict issues.

- Brad Cornell of Audubon of Western Everglades (AWE) provided 2 field trips for 28 members of the AWE on swamp buggies at FPNWR in February and April 2016 that emphasized strategies for recovering panther populations including underpasses, rural land stewardship areas (RLSA), conflict reduction, science-based land use, and incentives for private landowners.
- The USFWS Vero Beach Field Office lead the following outreach endeavors:
    - A Florida Panther Profile Page was established on the USFWS Southeast Region web site at: https://www.fws.gov/southeast/wildlife/mammal/florida-panther/
    - Over 100 citizens attended a public meeting on 12 April 2016 at the UF/IFAS Collier County Extension Office to comment on the Eastern Collier Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Florida panthers are the primary species of concern addressed by this HCP.
    - The USFWS Florida Panther Recovery Coordinator participated on a panel discussion on 15 October 2015 at a Town Hall meeting for sportsmen organized by State Representative Katie Edwards. About 100 people attended to address their concerns on panther related issues
    - On 24 March 2016 The USFWS Florida Panther Recovery Coordinator spoke at the Naples Zoo as part of their Evening Lecture Series and set a new attendance record with 302 people. Before the presentation, there was a 1-hour Q&A outside of the Zoo's Florida Panther Exhibit (http://napleszoo.org/panther) that houses "Uno," the panther who was blinded by a shotgun blast and was removed from the wild in 2014. This exhibit expands public awareness on challenges with large carnivore recovery, including social tolerance and human conflict issues. The presentation addressed successful panther recovery efforts and reported on challenges associated with an increasing, large predator population and the need for common ground among diverse stakeholder groups. In addition, the Naples Zoo also partnered with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission by constructing a new facility to provide temporary housing and care for injured or orphaned panthers that must be removed from the wild.
    - On 29 June 2016 the USFWS Florida Panther Recovery Coordinator, a Private Lands Biologist with the National Wildlife Refuge System, and representatives from the USDA Farm Service Agency hosted a public meeting in LaBelle, FL. This meeting addressed compensation options under the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) for livestock producers impacted by Florida panther depredations in southwest Florida. LIP information and application materials were made available to meeting participants, along with panther depredation field guides.
- Big Cypress National Preserves' (BCNP) environmental education program, SWAMP (Swamp Water and Me Program), is a hands-on, curriculum-based program provided to 6th grade students at public and private schools in Collier County. Students are first taught by a ranger in their schools and then take a field trip to Big Cypress National Preserve where they can develop an appreciation and awareness of Florida panthers, their habitat needs, and avoiding conflict with panthers. During FY2015-16, over 189 programs were conducted that reached over 4,890

participants (children and parents). Additionally, BCNP staff conducted 140 programs reaching 6,458 people that included Preserve visitors, 4H participants, and off-site audiences.

- Defenders of Wildlife, with the help of volunteers and other agency personnel, supported the Response Team's outreach efforts by attending many events throughout the year and distributing information on living with wildlife. A portable livestock safety pen exhibit demonstrating the concepts of a predator safe enclosure is frequently displayed at many of these events. Defenders of Wildlife spearheaded events at the following venues:
    - Preventing Conflict with Wildlife workshop, IFAS Office in Collier County, November, 2015 where approximately 50 people attended.
    - Swamp Cabbage Festival, LaBelle, February 2016. This two-day event was attended by thousands of seasonal visitors and local residents. Cost sharing opportunities with Defenders of Wildlife and the Conservancy of Southwest FL for building safety pens was provided to 40 people.
- Through the cooperative efforts of the Defenders of Wildlife, the Naples Zoo, Audubon of Western Everglades, Collier 4H, and FPNWR, the latest livestock safety pen design was permanently erected at the UF/IFAS Collier County Extension Office in Golden Gate Estates. This pen consisted of an upgraded and sturdier model than the original model fabricated 10 years before on the side of this facility. A leaflet rack for the Living with Panthers brochure, and interpretive panels for the pen, highlight this display which can be seen by visitors.
- Located at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), Mrs. Ricky Pires led the "Wings of Hope" environmental education program to engage numerous SW Florida schools. This program is also an integral part of the environmental humanities curriculum at FGCU. University students share their knowledge with 3rd - 5th grade students organized as the "Florida Panther Posse," in Collier and Lee County schools. Through the Panther Posse, elementary students develop reading, writing, science, geography, math, and research skills while working on current day challenges of Living with Florida panthers and water conservation issues. The program engages and involves over 450 university students who reach out to approximately 4500 elementary students (3 new posses established this period). Lastly, elementary students reach out to at least two other persons (not necessarily their parents) about panthers and their habitat, thus spreading awareness to an additional 9000 persons/year.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Florida panther depredation management issues also are being mitigated by other means. Although the Response Team is not directly involved with these efforts, they are mentioned for an awareness of activities on this topic.

Assistance Programs

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida launched two programs in June 2011 and continues to operate these programs; a pen building assistance program for small hobby livestock, and a cattle compensation program for free-ranging cattle on small operation ranches. More details about these programs can be

found by visiting https://www.conservancy.org/our-work/policy/florida-panther-pilot-compensation-program.

The *Pen Building Assistance Program* provides funds to assist landowners who have experienced a depredation from a Florida panther to build a predator-resistant pen to protect their livestock and pets from further potential depredation. Assistance was provided to four residences, in partnership with Defenders of Wildlife, totaling a contribution of $1,956 from the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

The *Free-Ranging Cattle Compensation Program* is designed to help compensate small farm operations (300 head of cattle or fewer) that have suffered documented calf losses to panthers. Four owners were compensated for four calves totaling $2,396 by the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

Defenders of Wildlife

The Florida office of Defenders of Wildlife manages a *Predator-Resistant Enclosure Program* to assist residents wishing to protect their pets or hobby livestock by housing them in predator-resistant enclosures at night when predators are typically most active. The cost-share program provides construction and retrofitting instructions, labor assistance, guidance on making one's property less attractive to predators, and financial assistance to eligible participants. Funds and assistance totaling $4,085.00 were provided for 6 new safety pens, one of which is on permanent display at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS) Collier County Extension Office.

Livestock Indemnity Program

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) authorized the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) to provide benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather. In addition, LIP covers attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law, including wolves and avian predators. LIP payments are equal to 75 percent of the market value of the applicable livestock on the day before the date of death of the livestock as determined by the Secretary. No payments from the LIP were made during this fiscal reporting period.

Table 1. Number of human-panther interactions and depredations investigated during fiscal year 1 July 2015-30 June 2016.

Interaction Classification	**Panther**[a]	**Lacking Evidence**[b]	**Other Predator**[c]	**Total**
Depredation	23	10	6	*39*
Encounter	4	2	0	*6*
Incident	0	0	0	*0*
Threat	0	0	0	*0*
Attack	0	0	0	*0*
Total	*27*	*12*	*6*	*45*

a. Physical evidence that a panther was involved.
b. No physical evidence was found to clearly determine the type of animal involved. Reasons evidence may be lacking include delays in reporting, evidence being destroyed by other animal or human activity, or environmental conditions or factors.
c. Physical evidence that another specific animal was involved. Other depredations were caused by bobcat (1), coyote (3) and domestic dog (2).

Table 2. Human-panther encounters in Collier County, Florida during fiscal year 1 July 2015–30 June 2016. Corresponding locations for the event numbers are represented in Figure 2.

Event Number	Interaction Date	Address / Location	City	Comments
1	10/19/2015	511 29th St NW	Naples	Juvenile panther observed on resident's property. Flushed from area by biologist.
2	12/4/2015	540 14th St NE	Naples	Resident unknowingly approached panther standing near deer carcass while retrieving dog. Panther ran off as resident approached. Panther verified as FP224 via telemetry.
3	3/28/2016	Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary	Naples	Two people knew a panther was ahead of them on boardwalk but continued to advance. Panther ran past them as they got nearer.
4	4/3/2016	Golden Gate Estates[a]	Naples	Panther entered lanai through open pet door and exited a few minutes later through same pet door.

a. Florida Statute Section 119.07(1) exempts certain records pertaining to specified personnel from public records law and are not subject to disclosure.

Table 3. Panther depredations in Collier, Hendry and Lee Counties, Florida investigated during fiscal year 1 July 2015-30 June 2016. Corresponding locations for the event numbers are represented in Figure 3.

Event Number	Interaction Date	Address / Location	City	Animals Depredated	Comments
1	9/7/2015	Neely Davis Rd.	Felda	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method.
2	10/2/2015	30290 Josie Billie Hwy.	BCSIR	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method, drag mark, tracks.
3	10/4/2015	3180 41St Ave NE	Naples	Duck	1 duck fatal, 2 ducks missing. Evidence: tracks.
4	10/5/2015	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: bite wounds, tracks, drag mark.
5	10/12/2015	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: bite wounds, drag, tracks.
6	10/15/2015	580 8th St NE	Naples	Sheep	4 sheep fatal. Evidence: panther hair, claw sheds on cabbage palm.
7	10/15/2015	18130 Misty Morning Ln.	Ft. Myers	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method, drag mark, cache site.
8	10/28/2015	1580 31st St SW	Naples	Goats	3 goats fatal. Evidence: feeding method, cache. Female w/2 kittens.
9	11/23/2015	30290 Josie Billie Hwy.	Clewiston	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method.
10	12/12/2015	441 6th St SE	Naples	Sheep	2 sheep fatal. Evidence: tracks, feeding method.
11	1/4/2016	JB Ranch	Immokalee	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method.
12	1/12/2016	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: FWC panther staff jumped panther off kill while conducting capture work on Immokalee Ranch.
13	1/25/2016	24900 SR29	Copeland	Dog	3 dogs (Chihuahuas); 1 fatal, 1 injured, 1 missing. Evidence: tracks.
14	2/10/2016	141 21st St NW	Naples	Goat	1 goat fatal. Evidence: tracks, trail cam photos. Female w/2 kittens.
15	3/15/2016	761 6th St NE	Naples	Goat	2 goats fatal. Evidence: tracks, feeding method.
16	4/11/2016	866 Cucumber Ln.	Immokalee	Dog	1 dog (Chihuahua) fatal. Evidence: tracks.
17	4/12/2016	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: GPS cluster associated with a false mortality notice led to discovery of kill
18	4/16/2016	360 20th Ave NE	Naples	Goat	1 goat fatal. Evidence: tracks, kill method.

Event Number	Interaction Date	Address / Location	City	Animals Depredated	Comments
19	4/28/2016	411 12th St NE	Naples	Goat	6 goats fatal. Evidence: tracks.
20	5/24/2016	4231 6th Ave NE	Naples	Sheep	4 sheep fatal. Evidence: tracks.
21	6/10/2016	Oil Well Park Rd.	Sunniland	Cow	1 calf fatal. Evidence: feeding method.
22	6/11/2016	2480 8th Ave NE	Naples	Goat	1 goat fatal. Evidence: tracks.
23	6/17/2016	1420 18th Ave NE	Naples	Goat	2 goats fatal. Evidence: feeding method, cache, owner trail camera photo of panther dragging goat.

Table 4. Number of animal fatalities and injuries caused by Florida panthers during fiscal year 1 July 2015–30 June 2016.

Animals	**# Animals Killed**	**# Animals Injured**	**Total**
Goats	16	1	*17*
Sheep	11	0	*11*
Dog	2	1	*3*
Duck	1	0	*1*
Cow-calf	11	1	*12*
Total	***41***	***3***	*44*

Figure 1. Number of reported human-panther conflicts per fiscal year. The FY11-12 and FY12-13 depredation tallies include radio ear-tagged calf mortalities documented during the UF-IFAS Calf Mortality Study.

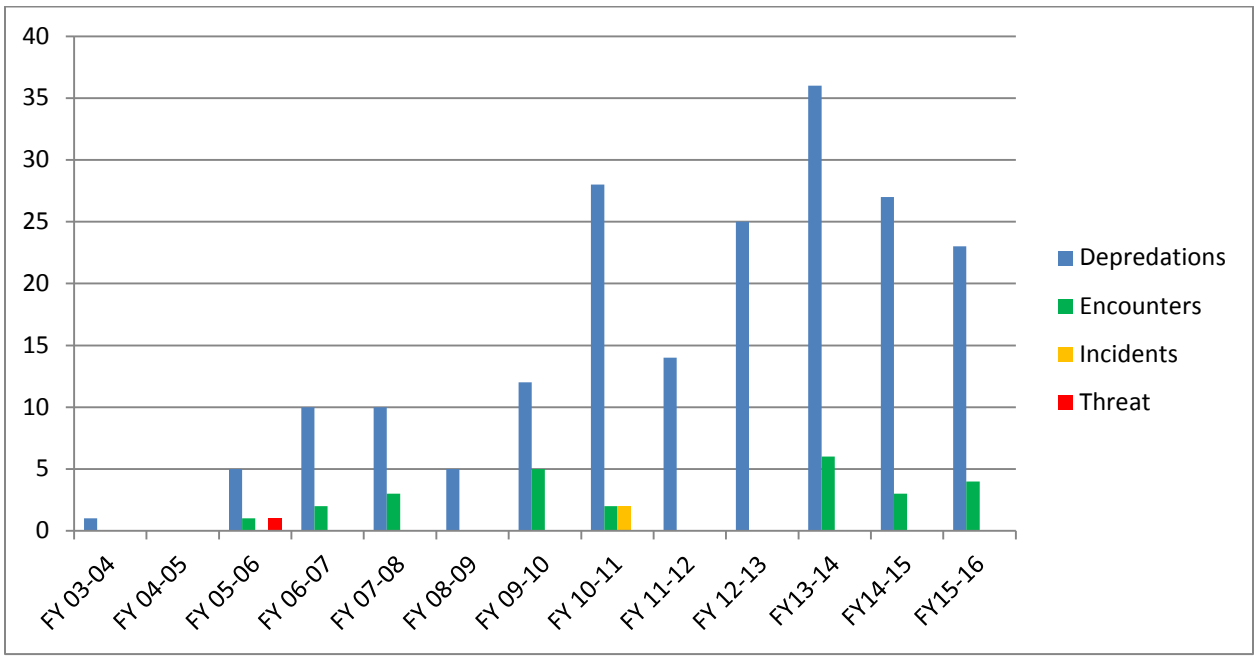


Figure 2. Panther encounters (event numbers correspond with Table 2) in Collier County, Florida during FY 2015-2016.

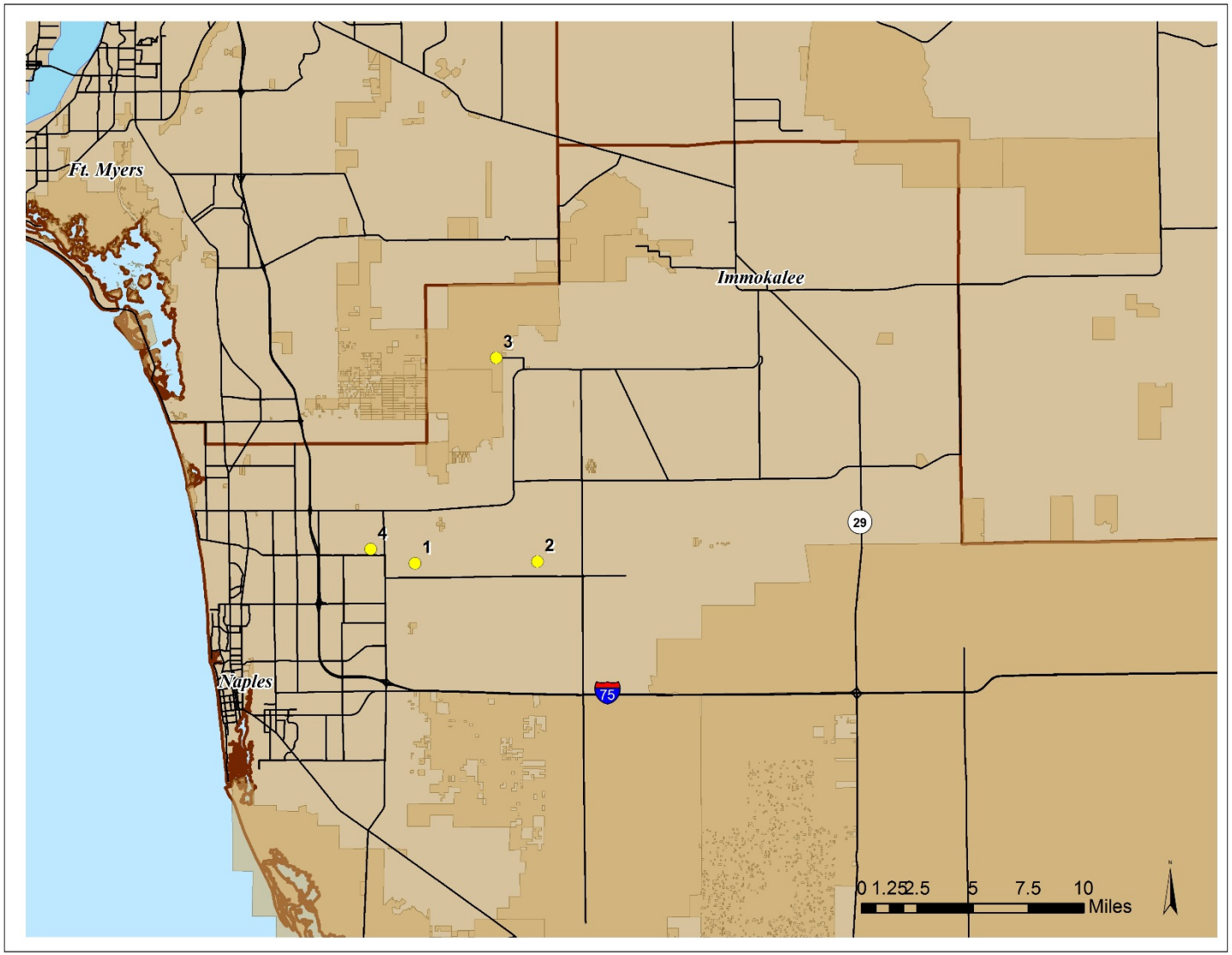


Figure 3. Panther depredations (event numbers correspond with Table 3) in Collier, Hendry and Lee Counties, Florida during FY 2015-2016.

Figure 4. A juvenile panther rests next to a house in Golden Gate Estates in Collier County until gently encourgaed to move along.

Figure 5. A family group (third kitten out of frame) is photographed in Collier Seminole State Park in Collier County 2 days before the mother, UCFP251 was killed by a vehicle. One kitten, UCFP253, was captured and placed in captive management.

Appendix I. List of depredations and human-panther interactions received by the Florida Panther Response Team during fiscal year 1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016.

Interaction Date	Address	City / Area	County	Interaction Type	Animals Depredated	Predator
7/19/2015	15171 N. Mallard Ln.	Ft. Myers	Lee	Depredation	Horse	NA
9/1/2015	1881 17th St SW	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Unverified
9/1/2015	691 13th St SW	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Unverified
9/4/2015	4935 20th St NE	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Unverified
9/7/2015	Neely Davis Rd.	Felda	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Panther
9/15/2015	4105 20th Ave SE	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Panther
9/25/2015	1171 21st St SW	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Panther
9/30/2015	30290 Josie Billie Hwy.	BCSIR	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Coyote
10/2/2015	30290 Josie Billie Hwy.	BCSIR	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Panther
10/4/2015	3180 41st Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Duck	Panther
10/5/2015	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Panther
10/12/2015	Immokalee Ranch	Immokalee	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Panther
10/13/2015	2651 Minute Maid Rd.	Ft. Pierce	St. Lucie	Depredation	Cat	Unverified
10/13/2015	5381 Coral Wood Dr.	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Bobcat
10/15/2015	580 8th St NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Sheep	Panther
10/15/2015	18130 Misty Morning Ln.	Ft. Myers	Lee	Depredation	Cow	Panther
10/19/2015	511 29th St NW	Naples	Collier	Encounter	NA	Panther
10/28/2015	1580 31st St SW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goats	Panther
11/1/2015	2424 Thorp Rd.	Immokalee	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Unverified
11/2/2015	7400 Arbuckle Rd.	Sebring	Highlands	Depredation	Cow	Unverified
11/11/2015	256 Rose Apple Ln.	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Horse	Unverified
11/18/2015	4415 13th Ave SW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Donkey	Dog
11/20/2015	7400 Arbuckle Rd.	Sebring	Highlands	Depredation	Cow	Coyote
11/23/2015	30290 Josie Billie Hwy.	Clewiston	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Panther
11/25/2015	2342 Old Bartow Rd.	Lake Wales	Polk	Depredation	Cat	Unverified

Interaction Date	Address	City / Area	County	Interaction Type	Animals Depredated	Predator
12/4/2015	540 14th St NE	Naples	Collier	Encounter	NA	Panther
12/12/2015	441 6th St SE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Sheep	Panther
1/4/2016	7007 SR29	Immokalee	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Panther
1/9/2016	818 Grace Ct.	Immokalee	Collier	Encounter	NA	Unverified
1/12/2016	No site address	Immokalee	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Panther
1/20/2016	840 7th St NW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Dog	Unverified
1/20/2016	11191 Moore Rd.	Lakeland	Polk	Depredation	Horse	Unverified
1/20/2016	1411 Palomino Dr.	Moorehaven	Glades	Depredation	Cow	Unverified
1/25/2016	24900 SR29	Copeland	Collier	Depredation	Dog	Panther
2/10/2016	141 21st St NW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther
2/19/2016	7550 Meadow Lakes Dr.	Naples	Collier	Sighting	NA	Panther
3/8/2016	3380 4th Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Encounter	NA	Unverified
3/15/2016	761 6th St NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther
3/15/2016	2113 Bell Circle	Immokalee	Collier	Sighting	NA	Panther
3/20/2016	410 20th St NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Unverified
3/28/2016	Corkscrew Swamp	Naples	Collier	Encounter	NA	Panther
4/3/2016	4521 5th Ave NW	Naples	Collier	Encounter	NA	Panther
4/11/2016	866 Cucumber Ln.	Immokalee	Collier	Depredation	Dog	Panther
4/12/2016	No site address	Immokalee	Hendry	Depredation	Cow	Panther
4/16/2016	360 20th Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther
4/25/2016	850 S. Live Oak St.	Clewiston	Hendry	Sighting	NA	Panther
4/28/2016	411 12th St NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther
5/24/2016	4231 6th Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Sheep	Panther
5/26/2016	556 29th St SW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Coyote
6/8/2016	82523rd St SW	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Cat	Unknown
6/10/2016	No site address	Sunniland	Collier	Depredation	Cow	Panther
6/11/2016	2480 8th Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther
6/17/2016	1420 18th Ave NE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Goat	Panther

Interaction Date	Address	City / Area	County	Interaction Type	Animals Depredated	Predator
6/23/2016	3421 6th Ave SE	Naples	Collier	Depredation	Dog	Dog

Florida Panther Response Team Action Report for Male Panther FP243

Capture, Relocation and Permanent Removal from the Wild

Prepared by: Florida Panther Response Team – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service

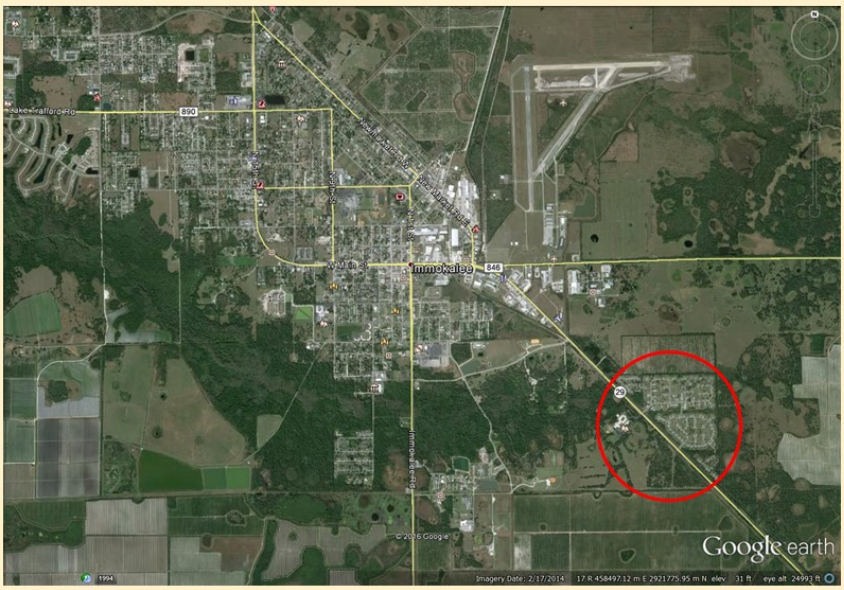
05 August 2016

FP243 is a young male panther that first came to the Response Team's attention at Farm Workers Village (FWV), south of Immokalee, Florida. This young panther was showing tendencies to frequent residential areas and was responsible for multiple sightings and depredations on dogs and cats. This report captures the events surrounding this panther and the subsequent management actions taken by the Response Team. The report is comprised of 2 sections: 1) a summary of events, findings and recommendations for FWV, including the capture and subsequent relocation of FP243 to Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP); and 2) a summary of events at the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation occurring post-relocation that led to the permanent removal of FP243 from the wild.

1) Farm Workers Village Summary of Events, Findings and Recommendations

FWV provides affordable housing in the Immokalee area and is operated by the Collier County Housing Authority (CCHA). FWV is located approximately 1 mile SE of Immokalee off of State Road 29 and contains several hundred homes. FWV fronts SR 29 but its eastern back border abuts quality panther habitat for approximately 0.75 miles.

Farm Worker Village, Immokalee, Florida
(circled in red)



The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has documented radiocollared panther use and roadkills within a 1 mile radius of FWV spanning many years. Recently, FWC investigated a series of panther sightings beginning in January 2016 by residents of FWV. These investigations revealed that the sightings were primarily of a young male panther that was taking advantage of Brazilian pepper cover on the north boundary of FWV, directly behind homes, and also preying upon an abundant free-roaming house cat population within FWV. FWC also documented a single visit by a second, older male panther. Following is a list of events investigated by FWC and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that culminated in the trapping and removal for relocation of a young male panther on 12 April 2016. This panther was taken to Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo (LPZ) for quarantine to ensure it had not contracted feline leukemia (FeLV) from any infected feral cats consumed before considering possible release sites.

Timeline summary

1/9/2016

Encounter - unverified

This interaction was investigated by FWC and a report was sent to the Florida Panther Response Team. FWV resident saw a panther on the other side of the fence from her yard, approximately 45 feet from her. Although no physical evidence was found to corroborate this encounter the homeowner shared video shot on 1/5/16 that showed a readily identifiable panther in same general location as sighting on the 9th.

3/15/2016

Sighting

Panther observed in area on 3/14/16.

Darrell Land (FWC), Mark Lotz (FWC) and David Shindle (USFWS) investigate. Dead house cat discovered that appeared to be killed by panther (broken neck), not consumed (not reported by anyone). Male panther tracks found along agricultural berm and crossing agricultural ditch on south side of citrus grove. Set 3 trail cameras.

3/21/2016

Sighting

Panther observed in early evening on 3/20/2016 walking along brush line by chain link fence.

Panther observed again between 9-10 pm, fixated on house cat in yard. Resident threw water bottle at panther causing it to flee in one direction while house cat ran in opposite direction. Panther was observed jumping fence. After panther jumped fence, homeowners reported hearing sounds that they interpreted as a house cat being killed inside Brazilian pepper on other side of fence. House cat discovered killed by panther, not consumed, at the location where the sounds were reported. Homeowner shared photo of a panther taken directly behind residence in Brazilian pepper on 2/24/2016. Male panther tracks found along agricultural berm and crossing agricultural ditch on south side of citrus grove.

Checked cameras and found panther photos on 3/20 and 3/21 (Table 1). Set 2 additional cameras for total of 5. House cat discovered killed by panther, not consumed.

3/22/2016
Email sent to Response Team to update on repeat sightings.

3/25/2016
Mark Lotz and Dennis Giardina (FWC) visit FWV to assess Brazilian pepper for removal options and attempt to locate property markers. Checked cameras; panther visits recorded on 3/21 and 3/25.

3/28/2016
Response Team conference call conducted to notify Response Team members of repeated sighting events, attractant issues (i.e. prey, cover), and actions to date. USFWS called the Collier County Domestic Animal Services (DAS) to discuss options for removing free-roaming house cats from FWV. DAS said they would respond to calls from FWV for assistance, but they only have one agent that works that area as well as a limited number of traps.

4/4/2016
Checked cameras; panther visits recorded on 3/27 and 3/28.
One camera removed due to malfunction. Four cameras remain on site.

4/6/2016
Two community meetings were held about living with panthers (Mark Lotz) and living with bears (Kathleen Smith, FWC). One translated into Spanish, one translated into Creole.

4/11/2016
Checked cameras; panther visits recorded on 4/5, 4/8, 4/9 and 4/10.
David Shindle responds (was called directly by resident) to complaint of Chihuahua being taken by panther. Finds fresh tracks in direction panther was reported fleeing. The owner of the Chihuahua also reports missing two Siamese cats between 4/8 and 4/10/2016. Consumed remains of cat (not Siamese) found while looking for Chihuahua.

4/12/2016
Lotz also looks for Chihuahua. Chihuahua not found but Siamese cat found partly consumed. 2-3 days old. Set 3 traps to capture panther. **Panther captured** at 9:30 pm.

4/13/2016
Panther transported to LPZ for quarantine due to concerns about FeLV. Panther tested negative for FeLV, but the incubation period for a new infection can be several weeks. FeLV can be found in domestic house cats and this panther was known to have consumed feral cats. This disease is almost always fatal to panthers. If the panther clears quarantine, the plan is to return it to the wild and initial discussions have been held to review possible release sites.

4/18/2016
Cameras removed because pepper removal set to begin on 4/19/2016. Panther recorded on 4/11 and 4/12. Landowner agreement developed and signed between Custom Citrus Care (CCC) and USFWS to start Brazilian pepper removal.

4/19/2016
USFWS chainsaw crew sent to fire, so Brazilian pepper removal delayed.

4/20/2016
USFWS developing plan for ground crew assistance and mechanical removal of Brazilian pepper. Planned start date will be May.
USFWS developing updated agreement with CCC.
Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) is scheduled to begin trimming, but not removing, vegetation within their powerline easement.

4/22/2016
FWC and USFWS met via phone to share updates. Vegetation removal has been delayed due to re-deployment of FWS crew. LCEC will only be trimming vegetation beneath their power lines but not removing it from the ground. FWC and USFWS are continuing to look at possible funding sources to at least begin some removals at the NE corner of FWV.

4/29/2016
Coordination continues among FWC and USFWS to identify resources for vegetation management at FWV. Various options are being explored but it is imperative to find the exact property boundaries so that we can apply the appropriate resources we have identified. Collier County has some additional resources that might factor in to the vegetation management and they have agreed to survey FWV's property boundary.

The panther that was taken to LPZ ingested some of the wood drift fencing and needed surgery to remove this indigestible material from his stomach. The surgery went well and the panther is recovering well.

5/4/2016
The panther's recovery from surgery is continuing well and he has resumed eating.

5/11/2016
FWC has identified some funding for exotic plant eradication that can be used at FWV. A conference call was conducted between FWC and the Executive Director of the CCHA to discuss where Brazilian pepper should be removed as a demonstration project. A site visit will be conducted on 20 May with potential vegetation removal contractors.

5/11/2016
CCHA has been trapping and removing feral house cats and raccoons. They are also securing vacant houses to prevent raccoons from using these buildings as shelters. CCHA is working with their current landscaping contractor to begin removing Brazilian pepper from within FWV and is making the long-term treatment and management of pepper a condition in future landscaping contracts.

5/12/2016
USFWS Kevin Godsea and David Shindle met with Collier County Commissioner Tim Nance to brief him on the FWV incident and seek county support for clearing and maintaining drainage ditches on the property. Commissioner Nance is going to reach out to County staff and the Chairman of the CCHA.

5/25/2016
Panther released in southern Big Cypress National Preserve near Gum Slough. Assigned ID of FP243 (was not a known [collared] individual when initially captured).

7/13/2016
Erin Myers meets with Luis Gonzalez (FWC), Pete Diamond (FWC) and landowners of CCC to discuss funding $29K of Brazilian pepper removal on their property just to North of FWV. Landowners now concerned about an increase in trespassing and subsequent liability issues following removal of vegetation buffer between CCC grove and FWV. Landowners want to see a high fence put up on the boundary either before or soon after vegetation management is implemented. Unfortunately, we are unable to fund a high fence at this time so need to reevaluate the plan.
Erin took Luis and Pete to CCC site to view topography between the grove and FWV and the extent of the Brazilian pepper infestation. We decide that we may be able to start pepper management on the FWV side between the 4-ft fence and the berm which represents the boundary line of CCC.

7/18/2016
Discussion amongst USFWS over landowner concerns and agreed that should start on FWV side of boundary and look for funding to cover a high fence over next year. The chainsaw crew may be available again to help remove Brazilian pepper, so decide to have Chad Mudge start removal on the Northeast corner of FWV and move his way west; and if the chainsaw crew is available then they can start on NE corner and move south.
Erin will contact Chad to determine how much of the area between 4-ft fence and berm that he can clear for $29K. Erin will contact Joe Prenger to determine if FWC land owner assistance (LAP) funds can be used to pay contractor directly for vegetation management. Kevin will work with FPNWR staff to determine where and when chainsaw crew can begin work.

7/19/2016
Erin Meets with Oscar Hentschel to discuss where would be the best place to put a high fence after Brazilian pepper removal is implemented and it was decided that it would replace the 4-ft fence. The Housing Authority will be responsible for maintaining area between fence and berm free of any new vegetation growth.

7/22/2016
Erin meets with Chad at FWV to discuss what he can accomplish with $29K, explaining that chainsaw crew can start on NE end and work their way towards him. Chad prefers to complete all of the northern boundary in one treatment, and he is willing to be paid in installments. Erin took this information back to Kevin for further discussion. It was agreed that Erin would budget a certain portion of her project funds over next 2 years to pay Chad for his work. Chad will receive initial $29K this summer from FWC (if Joe says it is ok), then remaining funds the summer of 2017 and 2018 if needed. Erin will develop an agreement with the Housing Authority to outline the work of all parties and how payment will be handled.
Erin meets with FPNWR staff (Bobby Schat) and chainsaw crew lead at FWV to discuss treatment of Brazilian pepper. Since Chad will treat all of Northern boundary, the crew will begin work on the NE corner and work south along the eastern boundary. They will work in the area between the 4-ft fence and the ranch fence on the Collier Enterprise Ranch to the east. They will use chainsaws to cut trees, then there will be follow up cut-stump chemical treatment. Cut limbs will be piled and/or removed from area as appropriate.
Erin introduces Bobby to Oscar, gives Oscar an update of the plan and reminds him that Housing Authority will be responsible for follow up maintenance of treated vegetation.

7/23/2016
Work begins on eastern edge of FWV.

7/26/2016
Erin sends justification to Joe for specifying funds from FWC agreement directly to contractor for this project.

7/28/2016
Chainsaw crew completes their training assignment having cleared approximately 250 yards of thick brush between the chain link fence and barbed wire fence on the east boundary of FWV.

8/2/2016
Erin receives the "ok" from Joe to proceed with vegetation management by Chad Mudge.
Erin contacts Chad, and work is scheduled to begin.

Findings

1) Repeated visits by FWC and USFWS revealed several conditions at FWV that contributed to the panther use of the site. A free-roaming outside cat population in FWV was being preyed upon by the panther. It is unclear whether any of these cats were owned by residents but we did learn that some residents would feed these cats. Additionally, one resident lost a Chihuahua, to this panther, and this dog was considered to be a pet. These small animals were serving as panther attractants.
2) Panthers were using overgrown Brazilian pepper as daytime resting cover as well as travel pathways, particularly along the northern boundary of the FWV property. This vegetation extended over a 4' chain-link fence that surrounded FWV. Panthers using such cover were within 50' or less of people's homes.

Figure 1 – Proximity of Brazilian pepper to house. Photo taken by David Shindle, FWS

Figure 2- Panther resting on top of berm in Brazilian pepper. Photo taken by Erica Martinez, resident

3) Staff at the CCHA indicated to the agencies that they also had periodic issues with bears. FWC and USFWS found trash scattered throughout the vegetation along FWV perimeter and we speculate that bears and raccoons may regularly raid garbage cans. Each home has a wheeled trash cart and the community's trash is picked up by Waste Management. The carts are kept outside of the homes and no homes have garages.

Recommendations

The Florida Panther Response Team offers the following recommendations to reduce the likelihood and frequency of human-panther interactions at FWV:

1) The free-roaming house cat population in FWV should be reduced and ultimately eliminated. FWV is in panther habitat and free-roaming house cats can attract panthers to the community.
2) If pets are permitted in FWV, pet-owning residents should be provided our "Living with Panthers" information. Pets should be kept on leash or confined to a kennel at all times while outside.
3) Trash management should be improved to reduce the likelihood of attracting raccoons into the community. One option for securing trash can be using trash can caddies that keep its contents away from wildlife. We have provided caddies, as well as caddy-building plans, to CCHA.
4) Vegetation management around the perimeter and along some interior sections of FWV would greatly reduce the likelihood of a panther resting close to homes. USFWS and FWC are looking

at existing resources and working with LCEC to remove some of the pepper. Removal of the Brazilian pepper is only the first step; a successful long-term strategy would be for CCHA to develop and implement a perimeter vegetation management plan that will prevent dense cover from returning within close proximity to homes.

Table 1. Panther activity recorded by trail cameras.

Panther trail camera photos at Farm Workers Village			
Date	**Time**	**Camera Location**	**Notes**
3/20/2016	8:46 PM	berm side	Young male panther
3/21/2016	2:20 AM	fence	Young male panther
3/21/2016	4:50 PM	berm top	Young male panther
3/21/2016	10:35 PM	berm top, berm side, fence	Young male panther lays down by fence for about 2 hrs (10:36 pm-12:44 am). Jumps over fence into FWV at 12:44 am.
3/25/2016	2:21 AM	berm top	Adult male panther with ear notch
3/27/2016	3:52 AM	berm top	Can't tell which panther, adult or subadult?
3/28/2016	9:51 AM	fence, berm top	Young male panther jumps fence to outside, lays down on berm about 10 minutes (9:52-10:01pm)
4/5/2016	10:19 PM	fence, yard	
4/8/2016	1:17 AM	yard, fence, berm top	Young male panther chews on opossum on berm top
4/8/2016	1:24 AM	fence, yard	Young male panther jumps fence into FWV, observed by person in car - headlights are on panther
4/9/2016	1:04 AM	fence, yard	Young male panther
4/10/2016	8:34 PM	fence	Young male panther
4/11/2016	9:15 PM	fence	Young male panther
4/12/2016	9:26 PM	fence (trap), yard	Young male panther trapped at 9:29 pm
4/18/2016			Cameras removed due to anticipated start of vegetation removal

2) Summary of FP243's Relocation, Post-Relocation Movements and Subsequent Permanent Removal from the Wild

FP243 was captured at Farm Workers Village (FWV) on 4/12/2016 and was taken to Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo (LPZ) for quarantine prior to relocation. A 6-week quarantine period was required because the panther was known to have consumed free-ranging house cats so we needed to ensure that FP243 was free of the feline leukemia virus (FeLV) before releasing him elsewhere. On 25 May 2016, FP243 was released in southern Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP) over 50 miles distant from FWV. The following is a timeline of FP243's movements and key events as the young male traveled north, ultimately reaching the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR; Fig. 3).

5/25/2016
Panther released in southern BCNP near Gum Slough. Assigned ID of FP243 (was not a known [collared] individual when initially captured).

6/10/2016
After initially heading south into the mangroves, FP243 returns northward and crosses US41 near the Jet Port.

6/22/2016
FP243 continues northward trek and crosses I-75 (Alligator Alley) between Snake Rd. and the L-28 Interceptor canal.

7/8/2016
FP243 moves into BCSIR community.

7/8/2016
Pet Chihuahua reported missing from a residence in the BCSIR community (Reported to USFWS on 7/13).

7/10/2016
Encounter at above residence reported to Seminole Police Department (SPD). (Reported to USFWS on 7/13 and encounter verified based on description of panther and GPS telemetry locations).

7/11/2016
David Shindle left message with Whitney Sapienza (Environmental Protection Specialist III for the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Environmental Resource Management Department) to brief her on the movements of FP243.

7/12/2016
Conference call held to update Response Team on FP243's movements within the BCSIR community. The Response Team concurred that the movements of FP243 warranted close monitoring and that the Seminole Tribe should be notified, including recommending measures to notify residents to report any

panther sightings to Seminole Tribe representatives, USFWS, and/or FWC. The Response Team agreed to have another call on July 14th to provide an update on FP243's movements and activity. No depredations or encounters related to FP243 had been reported to FWC or USFWS as of this date.

David Shindle made contact with Whitney Sapienza and briefed her on the history of FP243 and its current movements in the BCSIR community. Whitney agreed to begin providing notice to BCSIR residents and encouraging the reporting of any panther sightings, including FP243. The dissemination of "Living with Wildlife" materials was also discussed. David sent a map of FP243's locations within the BCSIR to Whitney.

David Shindle called SPD to speak with Detective Charlie Dachton (Agricultural Crimes Unity) to notify him of FP243's movements and to encourage any responding officers to a panther sighting or incident to use liberal, non-lethal deterrents to provide aversive conditioning to FP243 to alter his behavior and comfort level around humans. Detective Dachton was not available (on leave until Friday, July 15th). A message was left with SPD staff for SPD Reserve Captain, Victor Madrid.

David Shindle contacted Whitney Sapienza to inform her that he made an effort to contact SPD. David made arrangements to meet Whitney on July 13th in order to investigate areas of FP243's clustered GPS locations in order to document any potential prey items.

Depredation attempt on dog interrupted by owner at same residence as previous encounter and was reported to SPD (Reported to David Shindle on 7/13 and depredation attempt verified based on description of panther, GPS telemetry locations, and wounds on dog that were consistent with panther).

7/13/2016

David Shindle and Whitney Sapienza investigated clusters of GPS telemetry locations of FP243 in the BCSIR community. Remains of a panther-predated raccoon along with FP243's sign were documented behind the Frank Billie Field Office. When investigating second cluster of GPS telemetry locations behind resident's home, David Shindle received and verified reports of the above missing Chihuahua (7/8), panther-human encounter (7/10), and attempted depredation on pet dog (7/12) that occurred at the residence. SPD was contacted and requested to canvas the community to inform residents of panthers in area. SPD canvased area in the evening hours.

Conference call held with Response Team to discuss management options regarding FP243. Decision made to remove FP243 to permanent captivity based on behavior that meets the "threat" category (e.g., involved in previous depredation, behavior departs from expected or known, and previous actions have not deterred the animal's actions).

7/14/2016

David Shindle monitors FP243 from the ground and locates panther in woods directly behind residence where previous encounter and depredation attempt occurred. Shindle walked in to FP243's location with the intent to apply aversive conditioning with paintball gun, but dense cover prevented obtaining a

clear visual on panther before it moved approximately 100m in response to disturbance. Panther remained in dense cover monitored behind residence via ground telemetry until dark.
USFWS sends letter to Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman James E. Billie requesting consultation with the Tribe and approval to capture and remove FP243 from Tribal lands.

7/15/2016
David Shindle and Pauline Campi (Seminole Tribe's Environmental Resource Management Department) met with Detective Charlie Dachton (SPD) and located FP243 via ground telemetry. David and Pauline deployed "Panther in Area" signs and "Living with Panthers" brochures at the Frank Billie Field Office and the BCSIR's mail facility. David and Pauline investigated FP243's location to search for possible kills given that previous GPS clusters were located in close proximity to current location. SPD notified the Seminole Tribe's Environmental Resource Management Department of SPD's concern that FP243 posed a public safety issue. SPD also expressed concern for the safety of area pets and FP243. The USFWS were advised of these concerns and that the SPD requested the immediate removal of FP243 and that the USFWS should not wait for the approval letter from the Tribe.

7/18/2016
David Shindle and Detective Charlie Dachton (SPD) located FP243 on the ground with the intent to administer aversive condition via non-lethal bean bag shot. Although FP243 was still within the BCSIR community, it was determined that the application of aversive conditioning could move him closer to home sites and therefore was left undisturbed.

7/19/2016
David Shindle located FP243 approximately 50 meters west of the Big Cypress RV Resort and Campground. Captain Victor Madrid (SPD) requests that the USFWS remove FP243 "post haste". Captain Madrid advised the USFWS that community members had reported additional panther encounters during the preceding days. Although these reports were not investigated and are categorized as unverified, 2 of the reported events occurred on Henry Osceola Road, an area where FP243 was located during that time period based on GPS collar locations. One event would be categorized as an encounter (panther seen on porch) and the second would be an encounter/attempted depredation (owner intervened on panther coming after pets). USFWS receives letter from Seminole Tribe authorizing USFWS and FWC to capture and remove FP243 from the BCSIR.

7/20/2019
FP243 located in abandoned agricultural field north of the Big Cypress RV Resort and treed by FWC contract houndsmen Roy and Cougar McBride (Rancher's Supply Inc.) approximately 55-60 ft high in cypress tree. Capture attempt was abandoned due to safety concerns.

7/21/2016
FP243 captured in BCSIR community next to Big Cypress RV Resort and **removed to permanent captivity**. FP243 temporarily housed at LPZ until a permanent captive management facility is found.

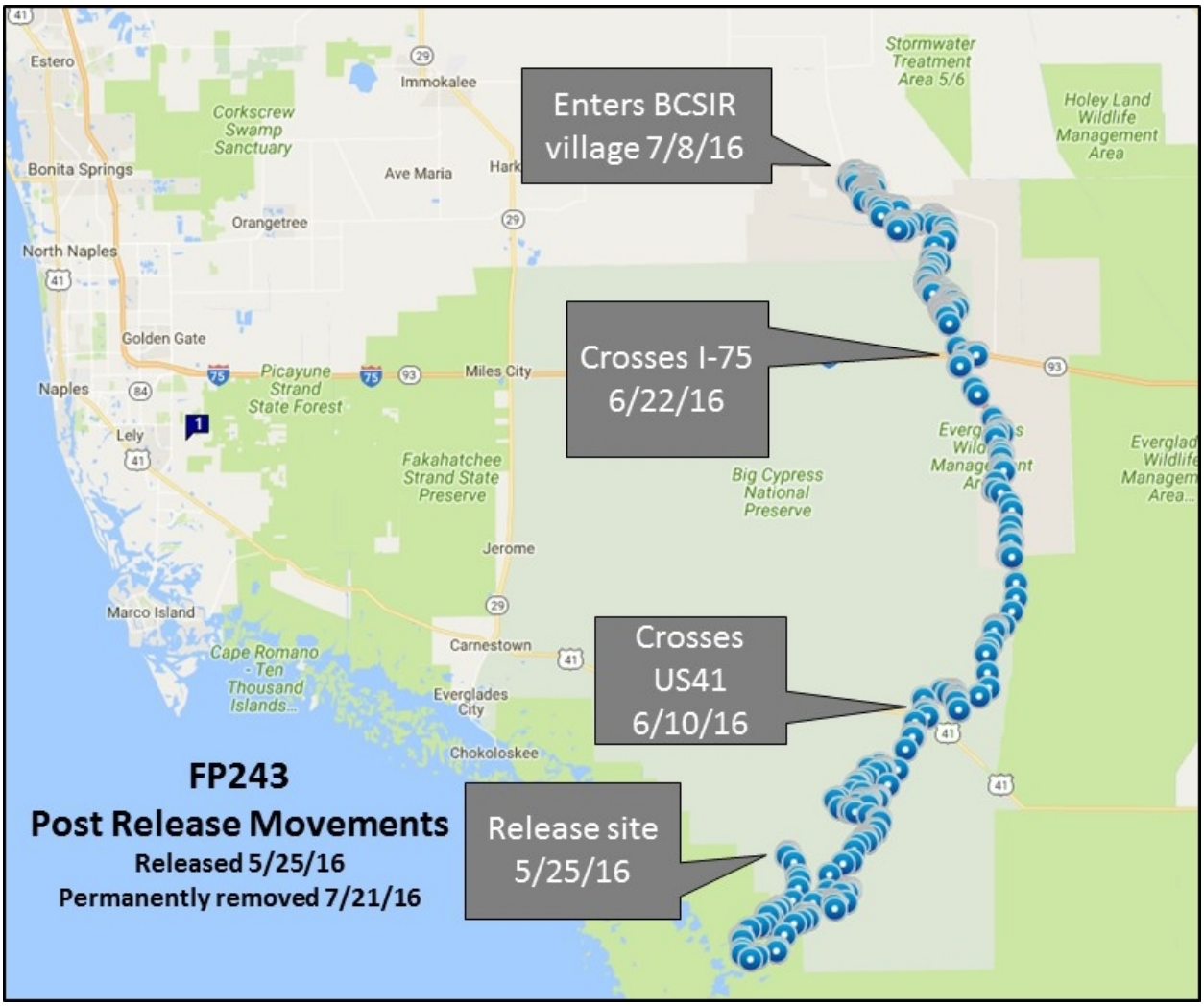


Figure 3 – Post release movements of FP243.