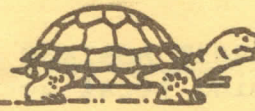


# TORTOISE T-R-A-C-K-S



THE DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER +++ SUMMER, 1983  
P.O.Box 453, Ridgecrest, CA 93555 + Vol. 4, #4 + Gloria Nowak, Editor

The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee recently learned of the availability of several hundred acres of privately owned land within the Desert Tortoise Natural Area. As the price was reasonable, an appeal for donations for this purpose was sent out with the California Turtle & Tortoise Clubs' monthly newsletter, The Tortuga Gazette, and also appeared in other similar publications. In response to this appeal, many contributions were received toward the \$14,000 goal. However, in checking further into the situation, we have discovered that government regulations present more of a problem than anticipated. Nonetheless, negotiations are now in progress for a 40-acre parcel. Since the DTNA is under constant threat from both within and without, the acquisition of this land will offer the best way to insure the survival of the tortoise population in the area.

At this writing, the Committee is indebted to the following persons and organizations for donations to the land purchase fund, ranging from \$1.00 to \$1,000; in the order received: Foothill Chapter, CTTC, Ed Brigham, Mr. & Mrs. Del Kealoha, Mrs. Joanne Lindamood, Mrs. Vera Ives, Mrs. Henrietta Lares, Al Ferazzi, Wallace E. Bjornson, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sterling, Sybel Higgins, James F. Schwimmer, Otto R. Meier, Mr. & Mrs. Alan Pinho, Elenore J. Reinhardt, Pamela J. Gates, Christina Jensen, Ruth K. Glunt, B. J. Nuremberg, Alice Geyer, Bishop Roman Maykowski, Martha L. Pontius, Jacqueline Welsh, Aurora S. Larson, Martha B. Moody, Dee Jackson, Mrs. R. Hanlin, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. J. Zesiger, Patrick Schiller, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. H. Craig, Martha Young, Dr. & Mrs. Ron Henry, Linda Baxter, Donald B. Eitner, Brett C. Stearns, Donna Savage, Mr. & Mrs. W. Scott, Laurie Fawcett, G. P. Schumacher, Mike Brown, Mr. & Mrs. Alan Elias, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Danielson, Ethel Hildebrandt, Marjorie L. Ives, Cathy M. Debs, Frank A. Santucci, George Vladimirov, Anne D. Bradford, Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Sciotti, Deborah Oles, Dana & Pam Karlin, David W. McNabb, Dr. C. Kenneth Dodd, Jr., Elisabeth L. Egenhoff, Jenny Figueroa, Lillian Nelson, Stephen W. Reyes, Mrs. Georgeanne Draher, Mary Alice Bye, James Laage, Mr. & Mrs. Jim Banninger, Kathy Schiek, Mr. & Mrs. John Talley-Jones, S. A. & G. B. Nichols, Jonathan Rai, Lorraine L. Foster, Steve Kandell, John M. Armstrong, Fresno Chapter, Amer. Assn. of Zoo Keepers, Walfrid Saarni, K. B. Anderson, Barbara Pixley, Frances S. Gardner and Betty E. Burford. Our heartfelt thanks to one and all!

OIL & GAS LEASING: As reported in the Fall, 1982 issue of TORTOISE T-R-A-C-K-S, the Bureau of Land Management "accidentally" approved an oil/gas lease which included over 2 sections in the northeast corner of the DTNA. The Bureau's cancellation of that portion of the lease was appealed by the applicant to the Interior Board of Appeals. The Board rejected our (DTPC's) application to intervene. More significantly, in February, 1983 the Board reinstated the lease on the DTNA. The decision does refer to the original lease stipulations giving the Bureau the option of limiting surface disturbances to protect natural and other resources; but from past actions such as the "accident", we know that we cannot depend upon wise use of these options by the Bureau. Oil/gas surface entry is not specifically addressed in the DTNA Habitat Management Plan. Not only will such exploration or extraction surface disturbance be disastrous to the habitat, but the decision sets an ominous precedent. That is management by mistake. The Committee and its legal advisors are exploring options to prevent the potential habitat loss that result from the situation.

- L.A.S.

COMMITTEE LAWSUIT AGAINST STATE LANDS COMMISSION: The following update on the DTPC ongoing legal action to prevent encroachment on the DTNA by urban development in California City was submitted by one of our distinguished attorneys, who is donating her time and expertise to the cause:

The tortoise won the first round in court! On April 14, 1983, Superior Court Judge James G. Bowles granted our motion to require the State to answer our questions and requests. The Court, in doing so, agreed that we have a right to know what went on both in public and behind closed doors that led to the State's abandonment of the Natural Area's interests when the State permitted Great Western Cities to open more California City territories for development.

As I wrote in the last newsletter, these motions were critical. If they had been denied, our ability to further prosecute the lawsuit would have been seriously impaired.

Unfortunately, the battle is not yet over by any means. The Attorney General's office, representing the State Lands Commission and its individual Commissioners, has filed a petition with the Court of Appeal to overturn Judge Bowles' ruling. We plan to actively oppose the State's move at the appeal level. I'll keep you posted. Thanks again for all your encouragement and financial support.

- Joy Lane

Copies of the previous issues which explain the circumstances of this lawsuit will be sent on request.

SPRING ON THE DTNA: Although the weather continued to be unsettled, the DTNA was a glorious place to visit this spring. During April and May, 125 people participated in Committee-guided tours. In addition, countless individuals and families enjoyed the interpretive kiosk and nature trails. Tour guides included Betty and Warren Forgey, Carol Panlaqui, Georgette Theotig, Bev Steveson, Mary Ann Henry and Laura Stockton.

The Bureau of Land Management could not spare any time from its "priority" schedule to repair the nature trails or print trail guides. W. Forgey, B. Steveson, C. Panlaqui and L. Stockton made up the emergency crew who prepared the trails for public use when the Bureau failed to live up to its responsibility.

- L.A.S.

THE SIGN IS UP! A 4'x8' sign, plagued by many delays in its completion, finally went up on June 4th. Funded by a donation from the Foothill Chapter, CTTC, the sign is designed to replace the weathered BLM list of rules for visitors. It also gives CTTC as a contact for captive adoption and information. Hopefully, the sign will help to limit the growing problems of people releasing pet tortoises in the area and removing wild ones from it. Committee members B. and W. Forgey, B. Steveson and L. Stockton arranged for the sign, picked it up in Gilroy and set it up.

MEMBERSHIP MEMO: You will find this enclosed in a convenient membership blank. If you have already joined or rejoined this year, please give it to a friend!

COMMITTEE MEETINGS: You are always welcome to attend. Next 2: the Ridgecrest area and the San Fernando Valley. Write for information and directions.

MOVING? Please help by sending us your new address right away. Thank you!

Best wishes till next time. REMEMBER OUR LAND PURCHASE FUND!!!

# DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE, INC.

P. O. BOX 453  
RIDGECREST, CALIF. 93555

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Area code: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or P.O. Box)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) hereby apply for the following membership:

- ( ) ACTIVE: For those who wish to ACTIVELY participate, ATTEND the meetings and CARRY responsibilities. (Active membership requires confirmation by vote of the Board).  
\$5 per year
- ( ) CONTRIBUTING: For those persons wishing to ASSIST with the objectives of the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.  
\$10 per year
- ( ) ASSOCIATE: For those organizations wishing to AFFILIATE with the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.  
\$10 per year

THE COMMITTEE'S OBJECTIVES: To promote the welfare of the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizi*) in the wild in southwestern United States and to assist with the establishment of the Desert Tortoise Natural Area on the slopes of the western Rand Mountains and in adjacent Fremont Valley in eastern Kern County, California. And to return the land to, and maintain the land in its natural state.

Also, to engage in such further activities as shall promote the welfare and protection of the Desert Tortoise.

Annual meetings are scheduled in January. Other meetings of the Corporation are approximately every six weeks. Place of meetings vary. You will be notified of meeting dates and places if you so indicate on this membership application.

Checks or money orders should be made payable to the:  
DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE, INC.  
and sent with this application to:

Secretary  
Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.  
P.O. Box 453  
Ridgecrest, California 93555

