



412 OSS

412th Operations Support Squadron

Drop Zone Brief





Natural Resource - Air Drop Concerns



- ☐ Air Drops that miss intended targets and fall outside of DZ boundaries:
 - ☐ Contact 412 TW CE/CEV at 661-277-1401 immediately.
 - ☐ No off-road driving outside of the graded portion of the DZ without a natural resources monitor. After normal business hours, postpone recovery until a monitor can be arranged.
 - ☐ Air Drops may be recovered without a natural resource monitor if recovery is completed on foot and vegetation is not disturbed.
- ☐ All project personnel working in the project area shall receive desert tortoise awareness training prior to commencing work or visiting the project site. Training is accomplished virtually by video: <https://youtu.be/I7Vm0dHwBbU>
- ☐ All trash and food items shall be disposed of in common raven-proof containers and regularly removed from the project site.
- ☐ Parking and staging areas are restricted to previously disturbed areas.
- ☐ Driving on the lakebed shall not take place when the lakebed is wet. Only essential vehicles and personnel can be on the lakebed.



Natural Resource Concerns



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☐ **Desert Tortoise:**

- ☐ State and Federally listed threatened species protected by State and Federal Law(s)
- ☐ Personnel must have desert tortoise training prior to accessing the DZ



☐ **Burrowing Owl:**

- ☐ Make every effort to avoid disturbing this and any other bird species since most birds on base are protected by Federal Law(s)





Natural Resource Concerns



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☐ Mohave Ground Squirrel

- ☐ State listed threatened species protected by State Law
- ☐ All wildlife should be left alone and not fed



☐ Desert Cymopterus

- ☐ One of many sensitive plant species found on Edwards AFB
- ☐ Desert vegetation is easily damaged and takes years to recover. Do not disturb habitat outside the DZ





Desert Tortoise

(*Gopherus agassizii*)



Adult



Juvenile



Burrow

- ❖ Federally protected as Threatened by the Endangered Species Act.
- ❖ Official state reptile of California! Soft scaly body with a hard shell. Could be green, grey, tan, or brown. Only 1.5 inches in diameter after hatching, but up to 1 foot in diameter as adult.
- ❖ Desert Tortoise protection at Edwards AFB is mandated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion: "Operations and Activities at Edwards Air Force Base, California" (8-8-14-F-14).
- ❖ Unauthorized collection, handling or harassment can be prosecuted: Fines up to \$50,000 and/or 1 year imprisonment.
- ❖ Often looks like a moving rock and hard to spot!
- ❖ Spends over 90% of its life underground in burrows.
- ❖ Most active in Spring and Fall but possible to see all year-round especially after a rain.
- ❖ Attracted to water. Often seen where puddling occurs during or after a rain (like road shoulders).
- ❖ Found throughout the Mojave and parts of the Sonoran Desert.

If tortoise found in immediate danger (on the road), and it is safe to do so, please move it:

Approach slowly from the front

Carefully lift tortoise by the sides with 2 hands and keep level

Move tortoise at least 100 feet away, in the shade, in the same direction it was going.

Call
412 CEG/CEVA
661-277-1417
661-277-1401



How you can protect the Desert Tortoise

- Do not handle a tortoise unless it is on the road and in immediate danger.
- If a tortoise is on the road in immediate danger, you may move the tortoise off the road.
- Check under parked vehicles and equipment before moving or operating.
- Keep vehicles and equipment on existing or approved roads and staging areas.
- If tortoise is sighted in project area, call 412 CEG/CEVA. Observe from a distance.
- Do not attract ravens. Ravens are a major predator of the Desert Tortoise. Keep trash in raven-proof containers. Make sure lids are tightly closed. Do not feed the wildlife!
- Ensure water tanks and trucks are free of water leaks that might attract predators.





Cultural Resource – Air Drop Concerns



- ☐ Numerous National Registered of Historic Places eligible sites in vicinity of DZ.
- ☐ No off-road driving outside of the graded portion of the DZ without a Cultural Resources monitor.
 - ☐ 15lbs training bundles may be recovered w/o an archaeologist monitor only if recover is completed by foot
- ☐ An archaeologist monitor is required for all vehicle recoveries efforts that land outside the graded area. Contact 412 TW CE/CEV customer service at 661-277-1401.
 - ☐ After normal business hours, postpone recovery until an archeology monitor can be arranged.
- ☐ User is responsible for confirming all obstacle/hazard locations prior to conducting DZ operations.
 - ☐ Please see DZ survey Section 11

Edwards Air Force Base

Cultural Resources Awareness Training

A Cultural resource can be defined as physical evidence or place of past human activity: site, object, landscape, structure; or a site, structure, landscape, object or natural feature of significance to a group of people traditionally associated with it (https://www.nps.gov/acad/learn/management/rm_culturalresources.htm)

At EAFB cultural resources include historic-era resources (typically more than 50 years old), military resources (related to the historic and modern military use of the area), and American Indian resources (generally called *Prehistoric* resources). Some of these resources as much as 12,000 years old

It is our goal to protect these resources because once they are gone we cannot ever get them back.

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Archaeological Resources Protection Act

American Antiquities Act

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

Air Force Instruction 32-7065

National Historic Preservation Act, Sections 106 and 110

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act



- ➔ If you did not drop it, do not pick it up
- ➔ If it is not yours, leave it alone
- ➔ The Environmental Management Group works closely with security to enforce Cultural Resources protection, including cameras near archaeological sites.

