



Safely Submit Your Gopher Tortoise Data to Make a Difference in Pending Species Status Assessment

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is conducting a Species Status Assessment of the gopher tortoise, throughout its entire range. At the end of this process, the Service will decide whether the gopher tortoise warrants listing as a threatened or endangered species in its eastern range. It will also decide whether the species will continue to be listed as threatened in its western range.

FLA has been working with the Service to find better, safer ways for forest landowners to share species data while protecting their private information. The Service makes listing decisions based on the best available data. This means the more data they have, the more likely they will only list those species that truly need protection under the Endangered Species Act.

With input from FLA and the forest landowner community, the Service has developed a Data Request Form for landowners to share information about gopher tortoise activity and habitat on their lands. To protect landowner anonymity, information can be submitted noting the location at the county-level, if desired. If enough data is submitted, landowners throughout the species' range may be able to preclude the need to list the species under the Endangered Species Act.

How to Submit Data

Landowners can submit their gopher tortoise data directly to the USFWS by using [this link](#) or by [downloading the form directly](#) from the FLA website and sending it to go-phertortoise@fws.gov. As an added layer of protection, you may also choose to send the form to FLA at the email below. All data sent to FLA will be anonymized, compiled, and sent to the Service as a single package, noting location data at the county level.

All data must be received by February 28, 2020. Please contact lward@forestlandowners.com with any questions or concerns.