Desert Tortoise
(Gopherus agassizii)

Adult

Juvenile

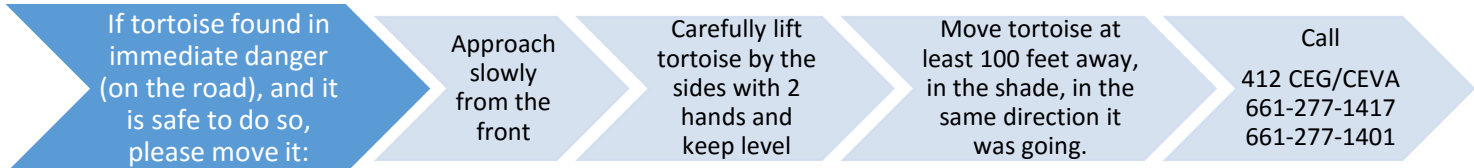**Burrow**

❖ 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.