

Florida Panther Field Note

Capture Season Update

January 2005

Four panthers were captured this month; two by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) capture team and two by the Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP) capture team. Additionally, one panther died due to intraspecific aggression.

Captures

- **FP69** Captured by FWC team on 1/3/05 on “Addition Lands” of BCNP. This female panther had a radio-collar that failed prematurely on 2/5/01. At capture she was noted to be in good health. She is likely raising kittens based on the re-growth of hair around her teats and that we were able to express milk from the nipples. Three kittens were confirmed by tracks on 1/13/05 when the whole family walked through a narrow muddy trail that passed through a small cypress strand. Based on combined evidence noted at capture and size of the tracks, the kittens are estimated to be about 3-months-old.



FP69 receives a thorough physical exam including palpation of internal organs.

- **FP136** Female panther captured by BCNP team on 1/13/05.

- **FP137** Captured by FWC team on Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest (OSSF) on 1/25/05. The FWC team has been concentrating their efforts on OSSF since this is the area where several cases of feline leukemia (FeLV) have been documented. The plan is to vaccinate as many panthers as possible in this area in order to prevent the spread of, and hopefully eliminate, this fatal disease. Male FP137 was FeLV negative, estimated to be 2-2.5 years old, and weighed 130 pounds.



Based on tooth wear and condition, FP137 was estimated to be 2-2.5 years old.

- **FP138** Male panther captured by BCNP team on 1/31/05.

Mortality

- **FP126** was an 11-month-old kitten when he was relocated away from his mother and natal home range in Big Cypress National Preserve to Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest on 5/28/04 "...because of the fear it has generated among the Miccosukees..." (see news release at <http://myfwc.com/whatsnew/04/relocate-st.html>). Although this young panther was relocated before he began a natural dispersal, the fact that he survived for 7 months illustrates the resiliency of these creatures. It was not until he began exploring and enlarging his use area that he encountered a neighboring resident adult male. This sealed his fate. FP126's remains were recovered on 1/3/05 east of Immokalee, south of CR846.