

July 17, 2008



Titan America's Center Sand Relocates Gopher Tortoises to On-Site Habitat

CLERMONT, Fla.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Commencing a two-year project, Titan America's Center Sand Mine relocated 56 gopher tortoises this week to a 35-acre, L-shaped habitat on Center Sand property that will never be mined.

A recent addition to the endangered species list, the gopher tortoise is named for its gopher-like tendency to dig burrows extending to the water table.

Center Sand had two options for protecting the tortoises: they could either request the State of Florida move them to another part of the state, or Center Sand could create a safe-zone habitat for them on existing mine property. Titan America chose the latter option.

"Our goal is to do the right thing for these creatures," said Terry Lancaster, Titan American Environmental Manager. "This is their natural habitat. We believe it's far better for them to stay within a couple acres of home than move many miles away."

Titan America Center Sand Mine General Manager Brian Bleakney added another point. "Our conservation area provides a greater degree of safety for the tortoises because they're fenced in farther from the busy roadway," he said. "Plus, we've gone over and above the minimum requirements: We've created new burrows, planted native plants they prefer, and cleared their land to specific standards."

Over the past several months, environmental consultant Biological Research Associates (BRA) counted and marked tortoise burrows in preparation for the moving process. BRA reports that they typically move 20 tortoises per day on projects like the one at Center Sand.

Last Tuesday, Biological Research Associates began the process of relocating Center Sand's tortoises to their new, safer home by excavating every burrow--more than 200 on the site, some as deep as 30 feet--and moving each tortoise to the habitat.

"We built a fence around the property that runs six inches into the soil to keep them in their new habitat," said Brian. "We also set aside more than enough land to follow the rule of four tortoises per acre, as our permit requires."

"This is another excellent example of Titan America's core values at work," says Tim Kuebler, Vice President of Titan America Florida Cement and Aggregates division. "We practice what we preach by being environmentally and socially responsible. Looking out for the welfare of the gopher tortoise on our property is our responsibility and privilege--and we're more than glad to do it."

Titan America is one of the premier heavy building materials producers in the eastern United States, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. Its parent, Titan Cement Company, S.A. is headquartered in Athens, Greece.

Source: Titan America