
Sec. 18-144. Activities within protection zones.

The following activities are permitted within the protection zones of the burrowing owl and gopher tortoise burrows with the understanding that if any burrow does collapse, it must be reported immediately to the city to ensure proper rescue efforts can take place:

- (1) City-approved volunteers, including FWC and Audubon staff and volunteers, who maintain burrows in designated zones in the city may conduct maintenance activities that shall include the clipping of vegetation within the protection zone, staking and posting the zone with flagging tape, string or rope, and signage, and recording pertinent data.
- (2) FWC or Audubon-trained contractors may enter the protection zone to remove debris with the full understanding that they can do nothing to disturb or harm the species or burrow in any manner. Contractors and lawn/lot maintenance companies shall accept full responsibility for the actions of their employees to ensure that all laws protecting such species are adhered to. Entry into a protection zone is prohibited except by authorized or registered agent, property owner, FWC, and trained city or Audubon staff, volunteers or consultants.
- (3) FWC or Audubon-trained city employees and property owners may enter the protection zone for the purpose of maintaining vegetation if using equipment that does not exert pressure on the ground to ensure the burrow does not collapse.
- (4) Scientific research/investigations approved by the FWC and/or the USFWS may occur within the city. The city shall be notified of all such research/investigations and provided with all study reports and publications.
- (5) Authorized representatives of developers including, but not limited to, professional environmental consultants that are conducting surveys or monitoring in conjunction with private or municipal construction may enter only after training or permit from FWC.
- (6) To prevent unnecessary disturbance, take or burrow collapse, operation and parking of any vehicles or equipment is prohibited within 33 feet of burrowing owl burrows and within 25 feet of gopher tortoise burrows.

(Ord. No. 13-05, § 2, 2-4-2013; Ord. No. 19-01, § 2, 1-7-2019; Ord. No. 24-15, § 2(Exh. A), 9-9-2024)