



Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center

Weekly Highlights for 03-23-2007

I. Departmental/Bureau News

A. Upcoming Events

None

B. Current

International Journal of Wildland Fire Most Read Papers in the Last Year

USGS scientist, Carl Key, from the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, is one of four authors on the 8th most read paper in the last year for the International Journal of Wildland Fire, which is also the oldest paper on the top-20 list. View the complete top 20 list at:

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/114/paper/WF06048.htm?nid=115&aid=4640>

Contact: Carl Key, 406-888-7991, carl_key@usgs.gov

II. Notable Congressional Activity

None

III. Press Inquiries/Media

Grizzly Bear Research Information Requested for News Story

On March 22, USGS scientist Chuck Schwartz, from the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, was contacted by Cory Hatch, a reporter for the Jackson Hole News. Hatch needed information for a story that was released on Friday, March 23. Schwartz is the team leader for the interagency grizzly bear study team (<http://www.nrmssc.usgs.gov/research/igbst-home.htm>) and discussed the monitoring protocols the study team is required to complete as well as how the team reports their findings. Hatch received information regarding grizzly bear mortality, counts of females with cubs, the importance of whitebark pine as a food source, and other food surveys. Schwartz notified the reporter about the role of USGS researchers studying grizzly bears, which is to collect unbiased scientific information regarding the status of the bear and the bear's habitat. Study team science is integral to the delisting process and can be used by managers, members of the public, and others who may be interested in the status of grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The article is available on the web at:

http://www.jacksonholenet.com/news/jackson_hole_news_article.php?ArticleNum=1649

Contact: Chuck Schwartz, 406-994-5043, charles_schwartz@usgs.gov

Study of DNA from Grizzly Bear Hair Samples

The Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) in northwest Montana is one of the last strongholds of the grizzly bear in the lower 48 states. Of the six established grizzly bear recovery zones, the NCDE potentially harbors the greatest number of grizzly bears, and is the only zone contiguous to a strong Canadian population. USGS scientist, Kate Kendall, from the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, has been working on a population estimate using DNA from bear hair collected along survey routes and from systematically positioned hair snag stations. Initial genetic results indicate a minimum population of 545 individual grizzly bears in the NCDE. Data collected during multiple hair snagging sessions are being used to estimate total population size. This is one of two critical pieces of information needed to assess progress toward grizzly bear recovery in the NCDE. Information from this study was reported on March 23, in a news article published by Karl Puckett of the Great Falls Tribune and can be seen at: <http://www.greatfallstribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070323/NEWS01/703230321/1002>

Contact: Kate Kendall, 406-888-7994, kkendall@usgs.gov

IV. FOIA

None