

Southwest Biological Science Center Weekly Highlights December 19, 2005

High snake captures provide unique research opportunity: USGS researcher Cecil Schwalbe, Southwest Biological Science Center, and University of Arizona graduate student Kevin Baker and scientist Matt Goode will attend the annual Science Meeting of the Malpai Borderlands Group January 9-10 in Douglas, Arizona. The Malpai Borderlands Group, an organization of ranchers in southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico, is working with resource managers and scientists to maintain their open-space lifestyle while preserving the biodiversity on their lands. Baker will present research findings for a new trapping design and habitat use by the snake species assemblage on McKinney Flats in the Animas Valley, New Mexico, where the researchers captured, marked, and released 1180 individual snakes, comprising 20 species, during 2004 and 2005. This new and novel capture technique allows scientists and managers to look at the relationships between the snake species and their prey, mostly lizards and rodents. Cecil Schwalbe, Tuscon, AZ, 520-621-5508.