Southwest Biological Science Center Weekly Highlights
January 23, 2006

Grasshopper research presented at international conference: USGS ecologist, Tim Graham, presented the following poster: **Grasshopper communities in native and non-native grasslands on the Colorado Plateau: differences in density and species composition**, at a conference sponsored by the Ecological Society of America. The conference was titled: Ecology in an Era of Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities for Environmental Scientists in the Americas, and was held 8-12 January, 2006, in Mérida, Yucatan, Mexico. The primary goal of the conference was to foster idea exchange and generate collaboration and communication among ecologists, economists, sociologists and anthropologists studying in the Americas. There were three sub-themes to the conference: Invasive species, Human migration, and Production issues. Tim Graham, Moab, UT, (435) 719-2339.

Arizona Game and Fish commends USGS and cooperators for quick action: Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (GCMRC) station leader, John Hammill, received a letter from AZ Game and Fish (AGF) commending GCMRC's cooperative work with Bureau of Reclamation, Western Area Power Administration, and AGF staff to detect, monitor, and mitigate a potentially major crisis to the Glen Canyon trout fisheries. Water released below Glen Canyon Dam was unusually warm and low in dissolved oxygen, resulting from natural phenomena, diminished pool levels, and stratification of Lake Powell which occurred late summer of 2005; these effects presented a risk to the trout fishery. Susan Hueftle, Flagstaff, AZ, (928) 556-7460.

"Are owls are the only bird that see the color blue?": USGS biologist, Charles van Riper III provided information to a National Geographic Kids Magazine website reviewer who is checking on some questionable bird facts. Dr. van Riper informed the reviewer that most birds with blue plumage see the color blue, as they have trichromatic vision much like that in man. Their retina is sensitive to mixtures of light waves or wave lengths from the middle to both sides of the light spectrum. In fact, it is presently believed that the vision in owls and many other nocturnal birds is sensitive only to black, gray and white. Charles van Riper III, Tucson, AZ, (520)626-7027

First Colorado Plateau Mountain Lion Working Group meeting chaired by NPS and USGS researchers: Researchers and managers from the National Park Service and Southwest Biological Science Center gathered in Flagstaff, AZ, on January 18th for the first meeting of the Colorado Plateau Mountain Lion Working Group. The group presented updates on ongoing research and current management issues and reached an agreement to completely integrate mountain lion investigations in Zion and Grand Canyon National Parks as well as in the Flagstaff, AZ, region. This integration will result in one of the largest databases on mountain lions, to date, as well as the opportunity to derive robust models and inferences with potentially broad application. David Mattson of the USGS and RV Ward of the National Park Service co-chair the Working Group. David Mattson, Flagstaff, Az, 928-556-7466 ext 245

"Wildlife water developments: the social construction of conservation conflict" presented to BLM: USGS researcher David Mattson gave a presentation to BLM managers from the Arizona State Office and Phoenix Field Office on January 20th in Phoenix, AZ. Mattson's talk is one of a series he has given, invited by the BLM, that describe research into perspectives of various participants in an ongoing controversy surrounding the maintenance of wildlife water developments in wilderness areas managed by BLM. BLM managers are using this information to help design an approach to reduce conflict and improve relations with and among stakeholders. The research described by Mattson was undertaken in collaboration with the Sonoran Institute, an organization devoted to helping conflicted participants in natural resources cases find common ground. David Mattson, Flagstaff, Az, 928-556-7466 ext 245