

SBSC Weekly Highlights, July 31, 2007

Press Contact: Kenneth Cole has been contacted for an interview by the British television production company, Pioneer Productions. They are making a documentary for National Geographic on the formation of the Rocky Mountains and desire information on past climates. Cole has extensively investigated prehistoric climate records in the Southwestern United States through carbon-dating material found in packrat middens. Contact: Kenneth L. Cole, USGS Southwest Biological Research Center Colorado Plateau Research Station, Flagstaff, AZ (928) 523-7767

Riparian Habitat Invasive Species Issues and GIS Modeling: On August 1, SBSC researcher Mark Sogge will travel to New Mexico to present two talks to an interagency group of federal and state biologists and resource staff. The presentations are being hosted at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Office in Albuquerque. The talks are intended to provide the agencies the latest information on two issues of importance along the Rio Grande. "Saltcedar as Habitat for Birds: Implications for Riparian Restoration in the Southwestern United States" is co-authored with Eben Paxton (USGS) and Susan Sferra (Bureau of Reclamation), describing bird use of saltcedar and presenting information that should be considered if undertaking saltcedar control as a means of riparian restoration. "Using a Remote Sensing/GIS Model to Predict Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Breeding Habitat along the Rio Grande, New Mexico" is co-authored with James Hatten (USGS), and overviews the successful testing of a GIS-based model that identifies Southwestern Willow Flycatcher habitat based primarily on the NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) signature of vegetation, as derived from Landsat satellite data. The flycatcher habitat model can be used to identify potential breeding sites, help select riparian restoration areas, and possibly track the progress of riparian restoration projects. This NDVI-based approach may also prove useful for modeling habitat relationships of other riparian bird species, and the riparian bird community overall. Contact: Mark Sogge, SBSC, Flagstaff, AZ, mark_sogge@usgs.gov; 928-606-1286.

USGS/SBSC Scientists Participate in Joint Meeting of the Ecological Society of America and the Society for Ecological Restoration International: Ecologists Kathryn Thomas and Bill Halvorson will present papers at the conference, held at the San Jose, California, Convention Center August 5-10, 2007. Thomas will present a talk on the restoration rapid assessment tool, and Halvorson will participate in a panel discussion on the difficulties in developing restoration goals when dealing with large restoration projects. Halvorson is the SER program chair for this joint conference which brings together ecologists and restorationists to explore the meeting theme "ecology-based restoration in a changing world". Contact: Kathryn Thomas, USGS/SBSC Sonoran Desert Research Station, Tucson, Arizona, 520-670-5534, kathryn_a_thomas@usgs.gov; Bill Halvorson, USGS/SBSC Sonoran Desert Research Station, Tucson, Arizona, 520-670-5612, bill_halvorson@usgs.gov

