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August 29, 2006

MEMO

TO: Grant Harris
Bridget Brown
Placer Moose Project Personnel

FROM: Don Spalinger

SUBJECT: Placer Valley Moose Habitat Evaluation Project: Project Timetable and Training Needs/Schedule

Hi Grant, Bridget,

I thought this would be the best way to organize the fall schedule, and clarify the responsibilities of each of the participants in the project. It's a complicated scheduling process, I've discovered! The students who will be involved in the project will probably have a wide variety of skills and knowledge, and thus the guidance they will need, and their capabilities will have to be determined as we go. I have about 10 students in the class, and two who will probably join the class in independent studies. I have tentatively grouped the class into 7 teams of 2 people each, and 2 of these teams will be responsible for developing (or at least working on) the habitat maps and forage biomass density surveys in Placer Valley. These are the students I would love to have you work with relative to GIS mapping and vegetation typing/verification, etc. I will meet with the two habitat teams on Friday, Sept 1, at 11:30 PM for about an hour, and I'll explain their duties and responsibilities at that time. You are welcome to join us at that time, if you have a chance. At this meeting, I will outline the field sampling protocol, give them the timetable we have put together for working in Placer, and then give them the contact information for the both of you. I could also give them the volunteer forms at that time, if this will facilitate processing. One or both field crews will be going into the field on the following weekends (and they can contact Bridget to get out at other times as well):

Sept. 15, 16, 17 (Fri - Sun): Placer Valley field trip. Take whistle stop train into Spencer Lake on Friday afternoon at 1:00 PM. Survey habitats around Spencer Lake on Saturday, float Placer River and sample the valley on Sunday. Return to Anchorage on Sunday at about 4 PM. Camp equipment goes in (stoves, tents, cooking gear, fence posts, typar, etc.) on this trip.

Sept. 29, 30, Oct. 1. Placer Valley field trip. Jet boat or take crane car out to Spencer Lake on Friday. Help set up moose pens on Friday. Sample Saturday, float and sample Placer Valley on Sunday. Return to Anchorage around 4 PM.



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Oct. 6, 7, 8. Placer Valley Field Trip. Jet boat in, with at least 6-8 people going in from Class. Objectives: tame moose observations, wild moose fecal collections, forage collections, habitat data collection. Break camp on Sunday. Float out on Sunday, taking habitat, wild moose fecals, and forage collections for analysis. Moose come back on Sunday or Monday on crane car, along with camp equipment. If the crane car comes in on Monday to get the moose, I will stay out with Bill to help bring in the moose.

Grant and Bridget: the habitat crews will need to meet with one or both of you after Sept. 1 at a time and place of your choosing, and you can go over what you would like them to accomplish relative to the GIS work. Whether they can do anything on Arc GIS is a big question, and whether they can learn to do things like fill in attribute data, query Arc GIS to obtain random points, and create a text list of the GPS coordinates is something you will have to determine, and probably have train them to do. If someone else in FS could train them, that might be another alternative. As a last resort, you may have to do all the GIS work yourselves, but I'd really like the students to learn some GIS during this process if at all possible. Anyway, I will try and fit the appropriate students to these teams, and then let you know if any of them have the capabilities or interests in learning the GIS stuff. Most students don't know how to use Arc GIS, but some will probably be keen to learn whatever they can.

Hence, I will get team assignments on Friday, Sept. 1, and then meet with the Habitat team and give them the basics of their assignment at 11:30 that day. As I said, you would be welcome to come and meet them at this time if you have the time. We meet in Science 123 (my lab). They will be required to investigate the field sampling methods, refine these methods if appropriate, develop the statistics for the sampling protocols, and then collect the field data, hopefully with the computerized methodology. I will have them email you to determine a day they can get together with you to go over the GIS part of the work. How does this sound to you?

One further question: Do you think the 3 weekends in Placer with 4 people working in teams of two (in addition to whatever Bridget and Michelle and techs can accomplish at other times) will be sufficient for sampling the habitats? It seems like a pretty decent effort to me, particularly if Bridget et al. can spend a decent amount of time sampling during Sept. as well.

Don