Hantavirus and Deer Mice in Western Montana [TWS]

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In 1994 an interagency study was initiated in Montana to: describe the prevalence of hantavirus antibodies in deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) populations in various habitats, identify how prevalence varied with mouse population dynamics, and examine the temporal and spatial variation of antibody prevalence. In addition, it was hoped that antibody positive mice would be found to share specific life-history characteristics, such as sex, age, and reproductive status. Eighteen mark-recapture trapping grids were established at six locations throughout western Montana. Small mammal populations on these grids have been trapped monthly through two summers. Populations on twelve grids were tested for antibodies during each trapping period. Six grids were set aside as controls to evaluate the impact of blood collection on survival rates. Antibody prevalence rates will be discussed in regards to habitat types and population characteristics. Also, a comparison of antibody positive and negative mice will be presented with a discussion of positive mouse characteristics.