Examining the Conflicts Arising in Human-Black Bear Encounters in the Tahoe Basin: A Mixed Methods Analysis

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Introduction

• Project Study Area
• Research Questions
• Methods
  – Interviews
  – Background Survey
• Findings & Results
• Conclusions
• Significance of the Research
Project Study Area

• Lake Tahoe Basin
  – Two States
    • California & Nevada
  – Four Counties
    • Placer, El Dorado, Washoe & Douglas
  – Two Cities
    • South Lake Tahoe & Carson City
  – Approx. 63 Distinct Neighborhoods & Communities
Research Questions

1. Messages participants receive about bears
2. Role(s) of messages in forming ideas about black bears
3. Role(s) of ideas in making decisions to intervene in black bear encounters
4. Defining a problem black bear through its behavior
5. More peaceful coexistence with black bears
Methods

Mixed Methods Research Design

Partially Mixed Concurrent Dominant Status

(Leech, 2009)

• Semi-structured Interviews & Background Survey
• Conducted Concurrently
• Analyzed & Interpreted Separately

Document Reviews

• State Laws, Policies
• Local Ordinances
• Incident Reporting
Interview Questions

• Ideas about Black Bears

• Encounters – Problem Encounters

• Knowledge of Black Bear Management & Non-lethal Approaches

• Community Meetings & Attendance
Survey Focus & Structure

• Ideas about Animals & Black Bears

• Black Bear Management

• Community & Community Decision-making

• Community Decision-making Processes & Important Conditions
Document Reviews

• Nevada & California Wildlife Laws & Policies

• California State Parks Policies for Human Bear Management

• Trash Containment & Management

• Wildlife Incident Reporting Systems
Findings & Results

Key Interview Findings
1. Ideas about Bears
2. Problems Arising in Human-Black Bear Encounters
3. Community Problem-Solving
4. Community Support Systems
5. Community
Findings & Results

Background Survey Results

1. Frequencies for Overall Background Survey

2. Significance Testing
   - Gender
   - Importance of an Impartial Facilitator

3. Potential for Conflict Index
PCI₂ – Unipolar scale

Gender & Impartial Facilitator

Very Important

Female 0.61

Male 0.8

Not Important At All
Conclusions

1. Ideas about Black Bears
2. Problems Arising in Human-Black Bear Encounters
3. Community Problem-Solving
4. Community Support Systems
5. Community
Significance of Research

• Expands CAR Literature to Include Focus on Wildlife
• Expands Human Dimensions of Wildlife Research
• Introduces Potential for Conflict Index to CAR
Thank you!

Questions?

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