



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the
Interior

Yosemite National Park P.O. Box 577
Media Relations Office Yosemite, CA
95389
www.nps.gov/yose/news

209 372-0529
phone
209 372-0371 fax

Yosemite National Park News Release

December 30, 2002
For Immediate Release

Where Are They Now? The Results of Bear Cub Rehabilitation in Yosemite National Park

Yosemite National Park wildlife management staff is optimistic about the fact that they have seen and heard very little from three orphaned black bear cubs that were "rehabilitated" and then returned to the park in the winters of 2001 and 2002.

This means that the effort to turn these cubs into wild bears has been successful.

The bear that was returned in the winter of 2001 was rehabilitated at the Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care Center in South Lake Tahoe, CA. The two cubs returned in 2002 were sent to the Idaho Fish and Game black bear rehabilitation center. The cubs learned survival skills and were raised on a natural diet so they would not become habituated to humans or human food. Their mothers were euthanized after displaying escalating aggressive behavior over a several year period.

The goal of the rehabilitation is to successfully release the bears back to their natural environment. The bears should be in good health, avoid humans, be able to find their natural food, and ultimately survive on their own.

When the bears were returned to the park, biologists fitted them with radio collars and tags so that they could track the movement of the cubs when they emerged from their dens. Since the bears have been returned, park staff has sometimes been unable to track the bears by the signals on their collars. At other times, the bears were tracked by ground or flight telemetry.

The two cubs that were in the Idaho rehabilitation facility last winter have never been seen by humans or shown up in a developed area that park staff knows of. When their signals were picked up, they were near the den site where National Park Service biologists placed them last winter. The other bear was seen on a few occasions this summer on the outskirts of Bridalveil Campground on the Glacier Point Road, but never obtained human food as far as park staff knows.

Sometimes, it is unclear exactly where the bears are or what they are doing. But in this case, no news is good news. What park biologists do know is that the bears have not been seen in the campgrounds or parking lots and that they have not been identified as bears that have been involved with incidents in the park this year.