

Modified Elk 'Cocktail' Lowers Knockout Risk

Redwood NP has been experimenting with a mixture of ketamine and xylazine (Rompun) to immobilize Roosevelt elk. Park staff, working in conjunction with Humboldt State University professor Richard Golightly, have successfully immobilized nearly 40 elk for research and management purposes. The effects of the immobilizing cocktail are reversed with yohimbine hydrochloride. Average down time per animal is less than an hour; average reversal time under four minutes.

The ketamine/rompun cocktail and reversal with yohimbine has proven to be an effective alternative to the use of drugs like M99, which is extremely dangerous in cases of accidental human exposure and has special registration requirements with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Another three-day workshop on wildlife immobilization and capture was held in early April and more are contemplated in the future. The classes, put on by Redwood NP with Humboldt State University and the California Department of Fish and Game, are designed to fulfill NPS training requirements (except for the OJT) for registration with DEA to use controlled substances in wildlife research and management. Cost of the class is \$87.50. For more information on the elk mobilization methodology and/or the wildlife workshops, contact Terry Hofstra, NPS fish and wildlife ecologist, Redwood NP, 1125 16th St., Arcata, CA 95521 (707)822-7611.