Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Predicting effects of climate change on native fishes in northern Great Plains streams

Discipline: Natural
Type of Project: Research
Funding Agency: Bureau of Reclamation
Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University
Effective Dates: 9/13/2012 – 6/30/2014
Funding Amount: $46,717 [FY13: $5,875; FY12: $40,842]

Investigators and Agency Representative:
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Project Abstract: Nesting is a pivotal event in a turtle's life history because all turtles must cone to land to net. Riverine turtles such as the spiny softshell typically nest with the floodplain fairly close to the river. Such nesting habit is created and maintained by river processes such as flood pulses, and the dynamics of sediment, ice and riparian vegetation. The same processes that create and maintain turtle nesting habitat are affected by human processes such as flow regulation, bank stabilization, livestock grazing, and recreation. Effective conservation and management of spiny softhell nest sites.

Objectives of this project include:
1. Documentation of location and timing of nesting by spiny softshells;
2. Measurement of habitat characteristics of spiny softshell nests;
3. Determination of incubation period of spiny softshell nests.

Outcomes with completions dates: January 1, 2018

Keywords: habitat and movement, spiny softshell turtles, Missouri River, Bureau of Reclamation, Montana State University