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Enhancing Communication and Knowledge Discovery Among Karst Biospeleologists: The Role of the Karst Information Portal (KIP)

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We are investigating calcite and monohydrocalcite moonmilk within different cave environments in order to help determine the relative importance of biotic versus abiotic mechanisms. We will discuss results to date including: organisms isolated from moonmilk, SEM images and EDS of organisms and their associated minerals, carbon stable isotope analyses, electron microprobe elemental mapping, and petrography.

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4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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Speleology is an intrinsically multidisciplinary field of study that draws upon a substantial grey literature (for exapmle, agency research reports) that is poorly indexed, difficult to access, and generated in many different languages. The creation and implementation of the Karst Information Portal (KIP) beginning in 2005 addresses these and other information access and management problems by focusing on providing a global portal that will provide a gateway to the Web for karst information and services. Digital versions of many karst resources will be available through KIP. Databases, datasets, bibliographies, images, grey literature, and the like. that have been created by karst scientists worldwide will be accessible through KIP federated searching (simultaneous search of multiple data sources) of identified karst sites on the Internet. The core idea is not to recreate databases that have been developed by others but to make those that exist (or are being developed now and in the future) more universally available and provide advanced tools for using them. In June 2007, an enhanced KIP was launched that includes *The Guide to Speleological Literature* database, a scanning electron micrograph repository, and links to key electronic karst resources. Knowledge discovery, commenting by users, and collaborative workspaces are being tested through the SEM (scanning electron microscopy) database in a joint project with Los Alamos National Laboratory. Biospeleology partners are needed to create and maintain databases of information and resources pertaining to biospeleology that can be linked to KIP.