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NEWS RELEASE

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NEW MEXICO SEARCH & RESCUE SUBJECTS DON'T FIT NATIONAL PATTERNS

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New Mexico search and rescue (SAR) subjects tend mostly to be hikers, according to Robert Koester, a Virginia search and rescue research specialist.

An internationally renowned SAR data analyst, Koester has compiled a database of search subjects from 10,000 incidents around the world. By establishing 41 subject categories, Koester has analyzed behavior probabilities, creating a sophisticated "Lost Person Analysis," (the title of his recent book) tool for search and rescue incident commanders

According to Koester, New Mexico shows fewer lost children and elderly than most other states, and higher percentages of lost hikers. His analyses include behavior patterns for Alzheimer's patients—a category that he expects to grow significantly as America's Baby Boomer generation ages.

Koester recently taught a three-day class on "Lost Person Behavior" to New Mexico search and rescue volunteers at Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron. There, more than 160 volunteers, representing 31 of New Mexico's 40 volunteer search and rescue (SAR) teams, gathered for E.S.C.A.P.E. the annual training conference sponsored by the N.M. Search and Rescue Council.

According to Council president Gary Cascio, New Mexico volunteer teams participate in 160 missions every year under the leadership of 42 trained field coordinators.

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