

## **REPORT OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT FOR 2001**

This is the third annual report for the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit. It outlines activities for the RM-CESU throughout 2001.

The RM-CESU was established in June 1999. RM-CESU activities in 2001 include:

- One Executive Committee meeting and one Manager's Committee meeting were held in Gallatin Gateway, MT in June.
- The Strategic Plan was finalized and distributed to the CESU National Council, RM-CESU Executive Committee and Managers Committee, and others.
- The Executive Committee outlined and approved a process for accepting new partners to the RM-CESU.
- The Executive Committee unanimously approved the addition of the University of Wyoming as a partner, with final acceptance awaiting federal partner signatures to the amendment.
- Five RM-CESU Executive Committee members participated in the 2001 National Network conference in Washington D.C. in June.
- \$2,413,641.00 in research, education and technical assistance projects were initiated through the CESU agreement.
- Successful workshops on snowmobile effects on wildlife, and lynx research were completed.
- 10 student internships and graduate research projects were facilitated through partner institutions and agencies.
- Kathy Tonnessen continued to represent the NPS at the University of Montana, coordinating research, technical assistance, and education for NPS managers through the RM-CESU partnership.
- An executive coordinator was hired in November 2001 to oversee administration, communication, and outreach. This position is based at the University of Montana.
- Perry Brown, Kathy Tonnessen and Ann Mayo Kiely held a meeting with the UMT research administration in November, updating them on CESU activities and clarifying agreement protocols.

### **Executive Committee**

An Executive Committee meeting was held on June 12 at the Gallatin Gateway Inn in Gallatin Gateway, Montana. The purposes of the meeting were to hear the University of Wyoming's proposal to join the RM-CESU, vote on the addition of the University of Wyoming, evaluate the year's progress, discuss developing a national area of focus for the RM-CESU, strategize on how to accomplish the tasks of administration and website management, and prioritize goals for 2002. The Executive Committee is composed of one representative from each RM-CESU partner. The 2001 members of the Executive Committee were:

Perry Brown, Dean, School of Forestry, The University of Montana, Chair of the Committee

Fee Busby, Dean, College of Natural Resources, Utah State University

Ed DePuit, Department Head, Renewable Resource Sciences, Washington State University

Pat Hurley, Chair, Environmental Science Program, Salish Kootenai College

Leonard Johnson, Interim Dean, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho

Jim McMillan, Dean, College of Letters and Science, Montana State University

Richard Jachowski, Director, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center

Dave Parsons, Director, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station. (Alternate).

Marcia Patton-Mallory, Director, Rocky Mountain Research Station

William Volk, State Soil Scientist, Planning, and Biological Resources, Montana State Office, Bureau of Land Management.

Phil Dittberner, National Sciences and Technology Center, Bureau of Land Management (Alternate).

Bob Moon, Chief, Natural Resources, Research, and Technology, National Park Service Intermountain Region.

Kathy Tonnessen, Research Coordinator, Intermountain Region, National Park Service (Alternate).

### **Manager's Committee**

The RM-CESU Manager's Committee met on June 13, 2001 at the Gallatin Gateway Inn in Montana, in conjunction with the Executive Committee meeting. A heavy snow and resultant loss of electricity and water made the meeting very interesting and limited participation by some managers. Highlights of this meeting included an update on the NPS Inventory and Monitoring program, a panel discussion about the science-management interface, an overview of RM-CESU accomplishments to date, strategizing for the development of a cross-cutting project, and a discussion of priorities for future activities. Suggestions for the next Managers Meeting included inviting faculty to present examples of collaborative research, and holding a workshop concurrent with the meeting. Managers from the National Park Service were well represented at this meeting. Better incorporating managers from the BLM and USFS remains a primary goal of the RM-

CESU. The managers who were present at the meeting came from different levels of their organization and they were distributed geographically across the RM-CESU region.

Managers present at the 2001 committee meeting were:

Ken Stahlnecker, Chief of Resource Stewardship and Sciences, Black Canyon of the Gunnison NM and Curecanti NRA, National Park Service, Colorado

Brace Hayden, Glacier National Park

Tony Schetzle, Assistant Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park

Sue Consolo-Murphy, Chief of Cultural Resources, Yellowstone National Park.

Tom Olliff, Chief of Natural Resources, Yellowstone National Park

John Varley, Director Yellowstone Center for Resources, Yellowstone National Park

Laura Hudson, Natural Resources Management, Intermountain Region, National Park Service.

### **Annual Work Plan**

The Executive Committee approved an annual work plan for FY2002:

- Hold two Executive Committee meetings—autumn/winter and spring/summer
- Hold one Managers' Committee meeting in conjunction with one of the Executive Committee meetings
- Complete acceptance of at least one new partner into the RM-CESU
- Develop an interactive web site for the RM-CESU
- Develop a strategy for an RM-CESU expertise directory that might be installed on the RM-CESU web site
- Solve the problem of accepting National Forest Systems projects
- If funding can be obtained, conduct a survey of managers regarding research, education, and technical assistance needs
- Develop a module on science and management for presentation at the RM-CESU Managers' Committee meeting
- Work with the BLM, NPS, USGS, and FS to determine if additional agency scientists or science coordinators should be added to the RM-CESU
- Develop one proposal for a project that involves multiple agencies and multiple universities

### **Projects Accepted**

Under the protocols established for managing the RM-CESU each university's Executive Committee member has authority to accept projects under the RM-CESU umbrella.

Obstacles in the national CESU agreement have prevented partnership agreements with the National Forest System and correcting these obstacles has been identified as a priority for 2002. Appendix A summarizes projects accepted under the RM-CESU agreement in 2001.

Additional projects are affiliated with the RM-CESU even though they did not use CESU protocols to become established. In 2001 such projects included:

- Research on noxious weed impacts on avian habitats in Grand Teton.
- Revegetation of disturbed lands at Bents Old Fort.
- Facilitation of 4 student internships in Rocky Mountain Region National Parks.
- A critique of the Prairie Dog management program at Black Canyon.
- Development of color plates for flora of Glacier National Park.
- Organization and facilitation of a natural resources workshop for Rocky Mountain Cluster National Parks.
- Educational support for noxious weed environmental educators at Grand Teton.