Report from the Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountains CESU partners and Boise State Outreach Visit November 15 and 16, 2016 Boise State University hosted Rocky Mountain Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit for the annual partners meeting and campus visit.

During the RM-CESU business meeting on Tuesday morning, the partners voted to accept the applications of two new members, University of Denver and Front Range Community College. Lisa Gerloff will work with the National CESU office to complete the amendment adding these two new academic partners and one new Federal agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Tom Fish from the National CESU office attended the meeting and gave a report on the National CESU meeting, including the CESU Council’s decision to keep the CESU Indirect Cost Rate at 17.5%. RM-CESU partners also discussed engaging both US Forest Service Research and National Forest Systems through the CESU, as well as opportunities to work with smaller partners, especially our tribal colleges.

During the afternoon of November 15, the RM-CESU met with key staff from the OSP and Research office over lunch. Dr. Jim Belthoff and grad students Chelsea Merriman and Benjamin Dudek lead us on a field visit to the Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.

The evening ended with mixer of RM-CESU folks, BSU faculty, staff, and students, and local agency representatives. A highlight of the mixer was a presentation by the 2016 RM-CESU Award winner, Greg Wann, from Colorado State University (see following article).

On the morning of November 16, Pei-lin Yu lead RM-CESU folks on a tour of BSU’s outstanding departments and research facilities and spoke with a number of faculty and grad students from the Raptor Research Lab, Anthropology, Human Environment Systems, Planning and Public Policy, Geosciences, and Civil Engineering.
Rocky Mountains CESU announces 2016 Student Award winner

Each year the RM-CESU recognizes the outstanding contribution of a student on a RM-CESU project. The recipient of the 2016 Student Award is Greg Wann, Colorado State University. Greg was nominated for this award by Dr. Cameron Aldridge (CSU) and Dr. Zack Bowen (USGS) for his contributions to RM-CESU project “Demography and Vulnerability of Grouse Populations (Oct 2014 - Oct 2016).” Greg’s research is focused on understanding population dynamics of white-tailed ptarmigan. Specifically, he is investigating factors that are affecting the individual fitness and population viability of the species in Colorado, in an attempt to understand why some populations are declining. His research will directly help managers within the National Park Service (NPS) and the US Forest Service (USFS) to better understand population dynamics and potential management and conservation strategies. Although just completing his Doctoral Dissertation, Greg is already recognized as one of the world’s leading authorities on the white-tailed ptarmigan.

Jerry O’Neal National Park Service Student Fellowship Applications are now being accepted for the Jerry O’Neal Fellowship for work in Glacier National Park, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, and Little Bighorn Battlefield NM. The fellowship aims to provide educational assistance for students seeking to understand natural and cultural resources issues and how these interact with human values. Special consideration will be given to proposals that address the following:

1. natural resource issues such as aquatic ecology, terrestrial ecology, fire ecology, invasive plants, and climate change
2. cultural resource issues, such as history and architectural studies, cultural landscape reports, ethnographic research and archeology
3. social science that informs resource management about a natural or cultural topic and/or that addresses visitor impacts to park resources

Competition is open to graduate students or superior upper division undergraduate students at RM-CESU universities and colleges only. Awards range from $1000-5000. Applications must be submitted electronically by February 16, 2017. Application Process
Glaciers are an important part of alpine ecosystems and Glacier National Park is experiencing rapid glacial loss. The loss of glaciers can impact streams by changing the timing, frequency, and duration of disturbance events such as floods. Streamside, or riparian, wetlands occupy a small percentage of the landscape but are important and highly sensitive ecosystems that are formed and maintained by the disturbance events of streams.

To understand how glacier loss impacts streams and riparian plants that are adapted to disturbance, such as willow (Salix) species, we studied streams and riparian wetlands directly connected to glaciers, permanent snowfields, and seasonal snowpack. We compared the physical characteristics of streams and the plants of riparian wetlands to evaluate changes in a future climate change scenario where temperatures continue to rise and glaciers transition to permanent snowfields and then to seasonal snowpack.

Our study found that glaciers support significantly different streams and have more willow (Salix) communities compared to streams supported by permanent or seasonal snow. Under a future climate scenario, as we lose glaciers from the landscape, willow communities and biological diversity in the alpine are also at risk.

Christina McKernan is a recipient of a 2013 Jerry O'Neal NPS Student Fellowship.
PARTNER NEWS & EVENTS:

University of Montana: Largest Single Gift in UM History Supports Conservation, Global Leadership
On Nov. 18, the Montana University System Board of Regents approved the naming of the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation and the Franke Global Leadership Initiative in honor of Bill and Carolyn Franke and their family’s transformative $24 million gift to UM.

Directed toward UM’s nationally recognized College of Forestry and Conservation and the Global Leadership Initiative, the gift is the largest single donation the University has ever received.

“We are both humbled and affirmed by the Frankes’ thoughtful investment in UM,” said UM President Royce Engstrom. “The ongoing work of the College of Forestry and Conservation and Global Leadership Initiative will have a profound impact on our future.” Read more: Largest Single Gift in UM History Supports Conservation, Global Leadership

Salish Kootenai College: SKC Students Study Bat Roosts on Flathead Reservation
In the interest of developing a greater understanding of the native and transient bat populations on the Flathead Indian Reservation, a few Salish Kootenai College students are assisting in laying the groundwork for a body of bat knowledge. Read more: Bat Roosts Study

University of Idaho: Idaho Climate Indicators Website Connects Professionals, Citizens to Needed Science
Natural resource professionals and citizens across Idaho have noticed changes in recent decades: bigger wildfires, later frosts, earlier blooming lilacs, decreased snowpack. To demonstrate how these changes connect with climate science, a group of current and former University of Idaho researchers launched the website Indicators of Idaho’s Changing Climate.

University of Wyoming and Bureau of Land Management: Wyoming Study to track wild horse movement
About 6,500 wild horses roam the rangelands of Wyoming, yet little is known about how they use the landscape. A new study from the University of Wyoming and the BLM is intended to change that. Read more: Tracking Wyoming’s wild horses

Calendar of Events:
December 6-8, 2016: NPS Rocky Mountain Network Board of Directors/Tech. Comm. Meeting, University of Montana, Missoula, MT

December 14, 2016: Great Northern LCC Webinar: Hierarchical Population Structure in Greater Sage-grouse Provides Insight into Management Boundary Delineation
Time: 12-1 pm Mountain / 11 am -12 pm Pacific
Presenter: Todd Cross, University of Montana and USFS National Genomics Lab for Wildlife & Fish Conservation
More Details and to Register for Webinar

April 2-7, 2017: The 19th George Wright Society Conference on Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites, Norfolk, VA. Conference Website
JOB OPPORTUNITIES

For details, visit on Job Opportunities

Department Head, Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Sciences, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID (screening of applications will begin 1/22/2017)

Assistant Professor of Integrated Water Resources, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID (screening of applications will begin 1/17/2017)

Dean and Wyoming Excellence Chair, Haub School of the Environment and Natural Resources, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY (screening of applications will begin 1/6/2017)

Collaboration and Policy Coordinator, Swan Valley Connections, Condon, MT (closes 1/4/2017)

Agroclimate Extension Specialist, Department of Plants, Soils, and Climate, Utah State University, Logan, UT (screening of applications will begin 1/3/2017)

Tenure Track Faculty in Wildlife Biology and Conservation, Western State Colorado University, Gunnison, CO (screening of applications will begin 1/3/2017)

Assistant Professor/Associate Professor – Civil and Environmental Engineering (holistic approaches to solving water problems in natural, built, and agricultural environments), Utah State University (screening of applications will begin 12/17/2016)

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Specialist, Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML), Air National Guard Readiness Center, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland (closes 12/16/2016)

Assistant Professor – Plant Sciences, Quantitative Genetics/Statistical Genomics, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT (screening of applications will begin 12/15/2016)

Assistant Professor of Biology (microbiology or microbial ecology), Biological Science, Washington State University Tri-Cities (screening of applications will begin 12/15/2016)

Rangeland Management Specialist, Bureau of Land Management, Ely, NV (closes 12/14/2016)

Soil Microbial Ecologist, Department of Plant, Soil, and Entomological Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID (closes 12/14/2016)

Archeologist, US Army Engineer District, Sacramento Planning Division, Environmental Resources Branch, Cultural, Recreation and Social Assessment Section, Sacramento, CA (closes 12/12/2016)

Forensic Scientist (Mammalogy) Recent Graduate, Morphology Unit of the Forensics Branch at the Clark R. Bavin National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory with the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in Ashland, OR (closes 12/7/2016)
Postdoctoral Fellow (project aimed at understanding how ecological assembly processes affect the evolution of species' traits and speciation/extinction rates), Department of Biology, Utah State University (screening of applications will begin 12/7/2016)

Assistant Professor, Geospatial Analysis of Environment and Society, Utah State University, Logan, UT (screening of applications will begin 12/5/2016)

If you would like to post an announcement in the next RM-CESU Newsletter or on the website, please contact the RM-CESU Coordinator at rmcesu@cfcc.umt.edu.