




Great Plains CESU

Annual Partners Meeting

*“Partnering to Sustain and Enhance
Our Great Plains Ecosystem”*



www.gpcesu.unl.edu



GP CESU Annual Meeting Overview

- Welcome and Updates – Paul Hanson
- Thomas Parr, Research Coordinator, NPS
- Federal Agency Partner Roundtable and Discussion
- 2024 GP CESU Graduate Student Award
- Shawn DeKeyser, North Dakota State University—Knife River Indian Villages Historic Site
- Wrap Ups and Additional Discussion



Host Office



Dr. Paul Hanson
Director

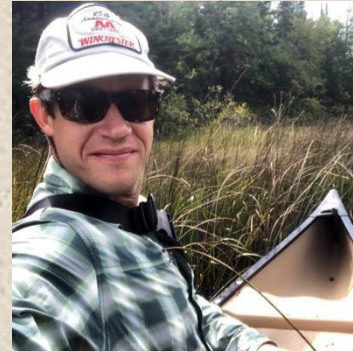


Dr. Thomas Parr
NPS Acting CESU
Research Coordinator



Barb Biffle
Program Coordinator

Thank you to Dr. Brandon Gerig



Brandon served as our Acting Research Coordinator for the past year and a half. Additionally, he was an ecologist for the National Park Service and coordinated the Great Rivers CESU.

He left the NPS in September of 2024, and accepted a position at the School of Freshwater Sciences at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. We wish him all the best!

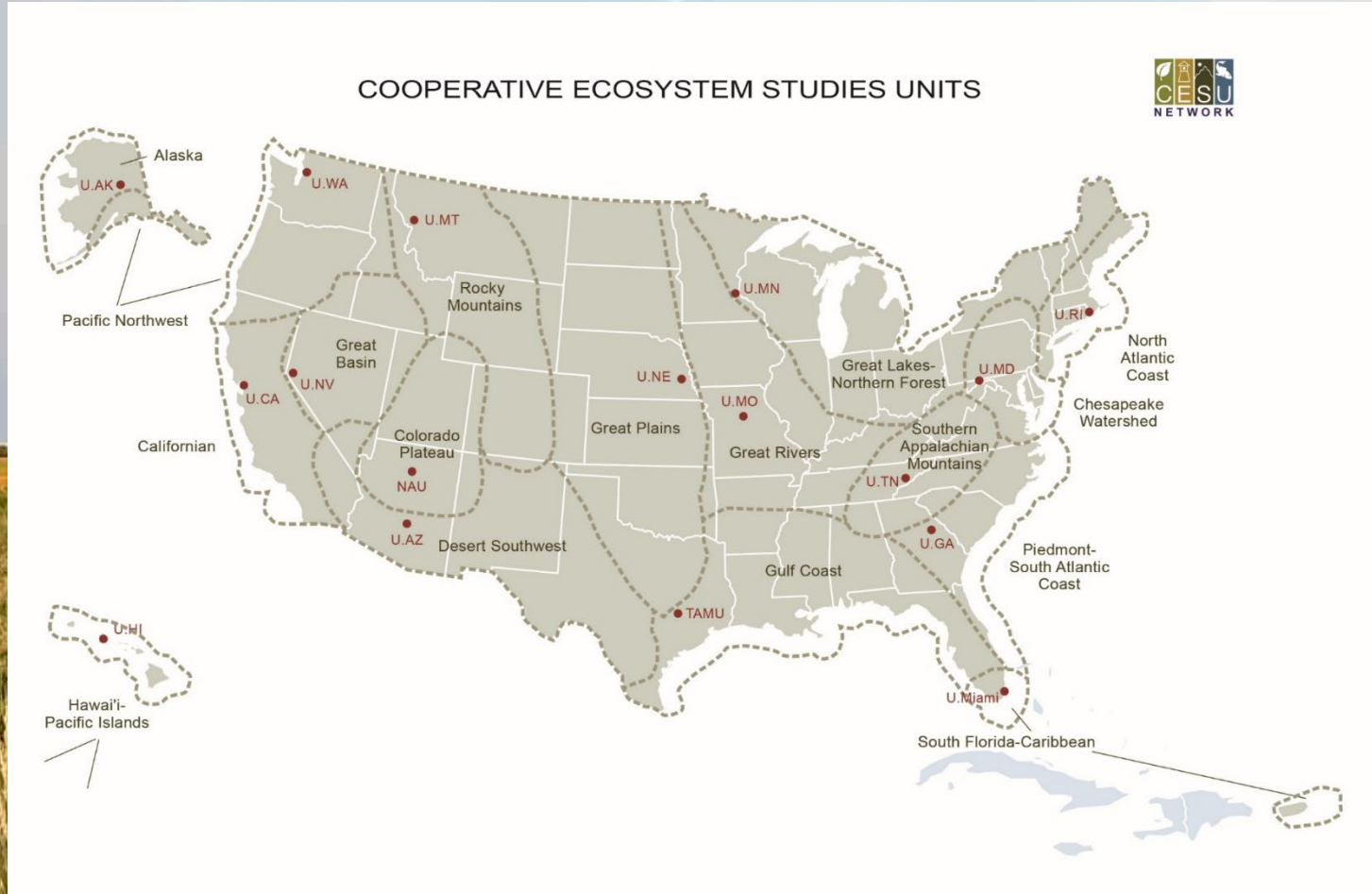




CESU Background

- **Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units** provide research, tech assistance and education to federal agencies assisting with issues related to land management, environmental and other research.
- CESU Partners provide the biological, physical, cultural and engineering disciplines needed to address natural and cultural resource management issues
- Objectives: utilize university resources and expertise while benefitting society, federal agencies, and students

Interested in becoming a partner of GP CESU?



Unlimited Opportunities!



Host University Role

- Provide space, administrative support and access to faculty, students, staff and resources.
- Office space for one federal research scientist from the NPS.
- Facilitating communication between federal and non-federal partners, maintaining our GP CESU website and holding an annual partner's meeting.
- Host universities are appointed to 5-year terms (2020-2025).



Operating Support Funding for GP CESU Host University

- Funding for host office at UNL:
 - Dues paid by federal partners
 - Funds from the regional NPS office
 - Funds from UNL's IANR
- Funds support:
 - 0.5 FTE Program Coordinator Position
 - 0.1 FTE Stipend for GP CESU Director
 - Website, database and IT/telecommunications support

Federal Partners (13)



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION





Non-Federal Partners

Academic Institutions (23):

Black Hills State, Colorado State, Colorado State-Pueblo, Emporia State, Kansas State, Langston U., New Mexico Highlands, North Dakota State, Oklahoma State, S. Dakota School of Mines, South Dakota State, Southwestern Oklahoma State, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nebraska Med. Center, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin-Extension, Wyoming, Winona State

NGO (3):

Smithsonian Institution, Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, World Wildlife Fund



Projects Funded Through the GP CESU in 2024

- **New and modifications were reported from BLM, FWS, NPS, NRCS, USACE, USGS**
- **12 New Agreements: \$2,916,465**
- **15 Modifications to Existing Agreements: \$2,540,805**
- **Total Funding: \$5,457,270**

**** grant totals as reported to us by federal partners at the end of 2024***

New Awards 2024

Agency	Partner Institution	Project	Award Amount
NPS	Emporia State University	Effect of Woody Encroachment on Prairie Streams	63,671.13
NPS	South Dakota State University	Northern Great Plains Biocontrol Project	270,000.00
NPS	University of Wyoming	Track Plant Diversity in Northern Great Plains Parks including floristic inventory specimen verification and supporting online resource development for NPS specimens	129,493.23
NPS	University of Oklahoma	Supporting floristics projects in Southern Plains Network national parks	12,263.00
NPS	University of Wyoming	FOLA Geophysical and Pedestrian Survey of Tribal Encampment Area	103,811.00
NPS	University of Wyoming	Inventory of T&E Bees and Butterflies to Inform Invasive Plant Treatment, Mowing, and Burning Management in Devils Tower National Monument, Jewel Cave	175,000.00
BLM	Kansas State University	Fire Science Exchange - National Interagency Fire Center Program Office	524,000.00
BLM	Texas Tech University	Wildfire in the Digital Era	24,509.00
BLM	University of North Dakota	Impacts of Prescribed Fire on Water Supply	499,598.00
USGS	University of NE - Lincoln	Developing a groundwater/surface water level monitoring program for NIOB: Test hole drilling and well installation	20,000.00
NRCS	University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension	Nutrient Management Needs Assessment and Training 2024. Conduct a nationwide needs assessment of key NRCS staff at the state/national level and of new hires with <5 years experience to determine the knowledge and confidence gaps in communicating nutrient management conservation practices to landowners, and based on these results, develop a training to address the needs identified.	600,000.00
NRCS	North Dakota State University	DSP Assessment and Digital Mapping	494,120.00

Modifications to Awards 2024

Agency	Partner Institution	Project	Amount
NPS	UNL-Bd of Regents	Expansion of Historic Resource Study on African American Homesteaders	22,700.00
NPS	Kansas State University	NPS Cooperative Agreement	41,629.83
NPS	North Dakota State University	Rejuvenation of North Forest at Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site (KNRI)	150,000.00
NPS	South Dakota State University	Developing Native Plant Materials for the Northern Great Plains	450,000.00
NPS	University of Wyoming	Macroinvertebrate Monitoring at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	40,851.00
NPS	University of Wyoming	Monitoring Bats in Northern Great Plains Parks	117,000.00
NPS	UNL-Bd of Regents	Leadership, Coordination, Admin. Oversight for GPCEU	16,200.00
BLM	South Dakota State University	INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF LOW-COST, LOW-TECH TOOLS (LCL TT) LIKE BEAVER DAM ANALOGS (BDAS) ON BLM GRAZING ALLOTMENTS IN	46,917.00
BLM	South Dakota State University	EVALUATING CURRENT AND FUTURE DISTRIBUTIONS OF INVASIVE RUSSIAN OLIVE IN WYOMING	133,151.00
BLM	South Dakota State University	THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT IS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL BARRIERS, INCLUDING SMALL DAMS, ROAD CROSSINGS, AND DIVERSIONS, THAT HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR AQUATIC ORGANISM PASSAGE.	220,000.00
USACE	University of Oklahoma	Identifying and Applying Engineering with Nature E/WN Solutions to Inland Locations of the Central United States	0
USACE	Kansas State University	Effects of Sediment Release from Water Injection Dredging on Downstream Freshwater Ecology in Kansas	34,762.00
FWS	Colorado State University	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION TECHNICAL EXPERTISE PURSUANT TO THE SIKES ACT FOR AFEC AT AVON PARK AIR FORCE RANGE, INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT	
NRCS	University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension	Virtual Water Quality Training Project. This agreement modification provides for the conversion of the 3 remaining water quality webinars to online training in the AgLearn System, updating the training materials to be fully 508 conformant	1,249,947.00



CESU Partners Discussion

- **Future Partners Meetings format and desires**
- **Website or social media requests**
- **Goals for 2025+**
- **Other discussion points?**

Questions?





Thomas Parr



Dr. Thomas Parr
NPS Acting CESU
Research Coordinator



Round Table Discussion



Nancy Finley
Tom Fish
Thomas Parr
Carlos Villarreal
Conor Ward
Paul Hanson
Others...





**2025
Graduate Student
Award Winner**

??

**This could be
your student!!!!**



Introducing the Grad Student Award Winner



Dr. Susan Felege



Zach Rigg





2024 Graduate Student Award Winner



Levin Brandt





Knife River Indian Villages Project



North Dakota State University



Dr. Shawn DeKeyser

A bald eagle is perched on a pine branch, looking directly at the camera. The eagle has a white head and neck, a yellow beak, and dark brown body feathers. The background is filled with green pine needles and branches.

Questions/ Discussion?

Deb Corder