



## Annual Report for 2025

*published in 2026*

### From the Director – Dr. Paul Hanson

Hello partners and friends! The past year was interesting and challenging for all of us on many levels and we want to thank each of you for your continuing efforts on behalf of the Great Plains CESU. In 2025, we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> year as host institution of the Great Plains CESU, and we were notified last fall that our continuation as host university for 2026-2030 was approved. So, we are celebrating here! We look forward to working with you all for the next five years as we continue our work to facilitate research efforts on our public lands. The most recent Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement (CJVA) is always posted on our website—see the most recent version here: <https://gpcesu.unl.edu/information/documents.aspx>



*As always, we welcome your input, ideas and thoughts on this process at any time.*

### GP CESU Staff

Dr. Thomas Parr continues to serve as our Acting Research Coordinator. He is with the National Park Service and also serves as the Research Coordinator for the Great Lakes/Northern Forest CESU. His academic home is the University of Minnesota Campus in St Paul. His extensive knowledge of the CESU system has been invaluable as we have navigated recent changes to our programs and his background will be instrumental to the GP CESU moving forward.

Barb Biffle, our Administrative Coordinator, is beginning her fourth year in that role. Her background as a public information officer, and in web and social media at the state government level helps her keep things running smoothly at the host office.

### National CESU Staff

Tom Fish, who had been heading the national CESU since its inception, retired in 2025. The Great Plains CESU thanks Tom for his long service to our program. Succeeding him is Bret Meldrum, who is with the National Park Service. Bret is overseeing the revamping of the main CESU website, as well as working with a team to streamline other programs within the CESU. The future looks bright for our CESU network.

## 2025 National CESU Meeting Recap

The 2025 National CESU Meeting was held in July 2025, as a hybrid meeting, and Great Plains CESU staff attended the meeting virtually. Meeting attendees included those in the national CESU office, members of the regional CESU offices, and representatives from our federal and non-governmental organization partner institutions. Highlights were discussions of activities and plans for the direction of the CESU, and funding needs and available resources were common themes across the board. It's always good to be able to have an opportunity to discuss our collective visions and plans for the future of the CESU's and learn what others are doing in their areas. The 2026 meeting is in the planning stages.

## 2025 GP CESU Graduate Student Award

Our 2025 Graduate Student Award was presented to Elisabeth (Elli) Teige of Kansas State University for her project, "Designing Optimal Landscapes for Lesser Prairie-Chicken Conservation". This project was funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the GP CESU. You can read about her project on our website: <https://gpcesu.unl.edu/information/studentawardrecipients.aspx>



## REMINDERS

- Please continue to send Technical & Administrative Rep contact changes any time to [gpcesu@unl.edu](mailto:gpcesu@unl.edu)
- We are always looking for pictures/videos/information of projects funded through the GP CESU. If you have things featuring field work and/or students in action, please send them to us for inclusion on our website. Partners will be credited. Submit any materials or questions to: [gpcesu@unl.edu](mailto:gpcesu@unl.edu)
- Planning for the 2026 GP CESU Annual Partners Meeting is underway. We hope to do it a little differently this year. Stay tuned...we will keep you posted via email.

**New and Modified Funding for 2025 is listed on the next page**

New Agreements in 2025				
Federal Agency	Agreement #	Partner	Project Summary	Award Amount
NPS	?	Nature Conservancy	Knife River Renovation Project	\$195,364.35
NPS	P25AM00124-00	U. of NE-Lincoln	Woody Encroachment Pilot in Flint Hills	\$1,200,000.00
NPS	P-CESU-2025-008039	?	Studies of Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve Predator-Prey Dynamics	\$54,631.00
NPS	P25AM00132	?	Studies of Settlement of Zebra Mussels in the Missouri River	\$69,097.00
DoW - Airforce	W9126G-24-2-0007	Colorado State U.	Seasonal Natural and Cultural Resources Management Program Support	\$1,347,252.00
DoW - Navy	W9126G-24-2-0065	U. of North Dakota	Baseline Biological Surveys at LaMoure Naval Radio Transmitter Facility	\$221,331.00
DoW - Army	W9126G-25-2-0016	Colorado State U.	Recreational Boating Survey, Broken Bow Lake	\$350,000.00
DoW - Army	W9126G-25-2-0024	Kansas State U.	Managing reservoir releases for aquatic communities in the Osage/Maris des Cygnes R. basin	\$100,000.00
				<b>\$3,537,675.35</b>

Modifications to Prior Agreements in 2025					
Federal Agency	Agreement #	Partner	Project Summary	Award Amount	
USDA - NRCS	NR233A750023C008	Kansas State U.	Lesser Prairie Chicken Landscape Models	\$525,000.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR233A750023C009	Oklahoma State U.	Wildlife Outcomes of the Conservation Reserve Program: A National Meta-Analysis	\$124,998.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR213A750023C014	Texas A&M U.	NRCS Cropland Conservation Effects Assessment Modeling	\$4,687,899.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR223A750023C014	U. of NE-Lincoln	Assessing USDA conservation program work on land use change in Great Plains grasslands.	\$717,720.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR233A750023C010	U. of Wyoming	Assess the efficacy fence designs to allow wildlife passage and contain livestock.	\$199,647.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR213A750023C012	Texas A&M U.	Data-driven support to assess the environmental effects of conservation practices--CEAP	\$901,624.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR213A750023C001	Texas A&M U.	Sustainable ecosystems for dairy manure	\$3,363,120.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR203A750023C020	University of Wyoming	Creation of Ranch Enterprise budgets for selected MLRAs for CEAP	\$280,000.00	
USDA - NRCS	NR203A750023C011	Texas A&M U.	Modeling water quality and agricultural conservation in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.	\$362,889.00	
USACE-ERDC	W912HZ-22-2-0031	Kansas State U.	Effects of Sediment Release from Water Injection Dredging on Freshwater Ecology in KS	\$0.00	
USACE-ERDC	W9132T-22-2-0008	U. of Texas - Austin	Intelligent Sensing & Energy Control for Combat Utility Reliability & Efficiency (I-SECURE)	\$300,000.00	
USGS	G25AS00104	U. of NE-Lincoln	NPS/USGS Groundwater Investigation near Valentine, NE	\$20,000.00	
NPS	P-CESU-2025-007947	U. of NE-Lincoln	Leadership, Coordination, and Administrative Oversight for the Great Plains CESU	\$25,000.00	
NPS	P25AM00132	?	Studies of Settlement of Zebra Mussels in the Missouri River	\$22,250.00	
NPS	P24AM01408	?	Supporting floristics projects in Southern Plains Network national parks	\$23,141.00	
NPS	P25AM00124	U. of NE-Lincoln	Leadership, Coordination, and Administrative Oversight for the Great Plains CESU	\$35,000.00	
DoW - Navy	N62470-23-2-0005	Colorado State U.	Provide Ecosystem Management Technical Assistance	\$38,967.04	
DoW - Army	W9126G-21-2-0060	Colorado State U.	Fort Johnson Conservation Program Support	\$70,810.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-21-2-0060	Colorado State U.	Fort Johnson Conservation Program Support	\$1,354,478.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-21-2-0013	Colorado State U.	Maneuver Damage Coordination Support	\$298,450.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-23-2-0034	Colorado State U.	Natural Resource Support Forestry, Fort Stewart, Georgia	\$1,342,600.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-24-2-0004 (P0002)	Colorado State U.	Natural Resource Support for IMCOM at Multiple Installations	\$6,738,569.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-24-2-0004 (P0003)	Colorado State U.	Natural Resource Support for IMCOM at Multiple Installations	\$173,083.00	
DoW - Army	W9126G-23-2-0043	Kansas State U.	Monitoring Tuttle Creek Reservoir Water Injection Dredging, Kansas and Big Blue Rivers	\$92,399.00	
DoW - Air Force	W9126G-24-2-0007	Colorado State U.	Seasonal Natural and Cultural Resources Management Program Support	\$29,669.00	
DoW - Air Force	W9126G-24-2-0007	Colorado State U.	Seasonal Natural and Cultural Resources Management Program Support	\$1,237,613.00	
DoW - Navy	N62473-23-2-0008	Texas Tech U.	1 S SW NBPL- Orcutt's spineflower Management/Protection [OPTION 1 & 2]	\$33,161.00	
DoW - Navy	N62473-23-2-0008	Texas Tech U.	1 S SW NBPL- Orcutt's spineflower Management/Protection	\$74,531.00	
				<b>2025 Funding Total</b>	<b>\$23,072,618.04</b>