

**Great Plains Cooperative Ecosystem
Studies Unit
FY 2015
Annual Report to the Cooperative
Ecosystem Studies Unit Council**



Director's Report

FY 2015 was a milestone in the Great Plains CESU, as the year marked the end of the 2010-2015 Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement between our partners. The Great Plains CESU has always been hosted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and UNL indicated it was willing to continue as the host university. Thus, a major accomplishment for this annual fiscal period was the submission of our Self-Assessment document in February 2015 to the CESU Council for the previous 5-year period.

The Great Plains CESU's NPS Research Coordinator position had remained empty until December 2014, at which time the NPS announced that Dr. Tanya Shenk had been selected to fill the position. Dr. Shenk began her role in late February, 2015.

The Great Plains CESU had functioned without an office associate for many years, because of a lack of base support through the CESU system. Many functions, including the submission of annual reports, record-keeping, web-site updates, and engagement with partners, had been ignored, necessarily, for a number of years. But, in September 2015, we were able to hire Ms. Katherine Bickert as an office associate. She immediately began to address several of the voids of information, including planning for a new web site and attempts to document funding through the Great Plains CESU Agreement. Kat also developed a quarterly newsletter for the Great Plains CESU that was first distributed to partners in September 2015.

The office support was possible because of an in-house, temporary 'fix' to the problem of CESU base support funding. The Institute of Natural Resources (IANR) of UNL announced that they were supportive of a CESU-support proposal championed by Dr. Powell and the Director of the School of Natural Resources, Dr. John Carroll. Beginning in Fall 2014, IANR is providing, for a trial period of three years, support that includes \$14,000/yr in administrative support and \$15,000/yr in office support that will provide a part-time office assistant for the Great Plains CESU.

Further, in December of 2014, the CESU National System announced changes to host support that will improve the functionality of the CESU host universities by adding continual base support. The next agreement period, beginning in 2015, is set to be an impressive period for the Great Plains CESU. We have a new NPS Research Coordinator, on-site. We have institutional support for the CESU Director. And, we have the promise of continued support from our federal agency partners.

As evidence of the continued energy and growth in partnerships in the Great Plains CESU, we added four new partners during FY2015. In December 2014, we added Texas Tech University

and World Wildlife Fund: Northern Great Plains. WWF is our first NGO member. In August 2015, we added NOAA and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Our total is now 12 federal agencies and 21 university/non-federal partners.

Financial Report

The following projects were documented during FY2015 using Great Plains CESU's Cooperative Agreement. *It should be noted that USFWS does not keep internal documentation that allows them to distinguish projects that are funded through the CESU agreement. And, we did not receive information from several other agencies, which continues to be a limiting factor in our effectiveness to document the impact of the National CESU system.*

Agreements with \$0.00 funding levels indicate no-cost modification agreements.

AGENCY	TASK AGREEMENT	PROJECT TITLE	ACADEMIC PARTNER	FUNDING	Start Year
NPS	P14AC00085	Systematic metal detector survey of the 1862 encampment of the First Colorado Volunteer Infantry Regiment at Fort Union NM, Watrous, New Mexico	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	\$0.00	2013
NPS	P14AC00086	Archeological Inventory of the Platt National Park National Historic Landmark District (Platt Historic District), Chickasaw National Recreation Area	University of Nebraska,-Lincoln	\$0.00	2013
NPS	P14AC00550	Establish Baseline Data on Current Status of Bat Species within Wind Cave National Park	University of Wyoming	\$0.00	2014

NPS	P14AC00804	Create Virtual Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail E-Float	University of South Dakota	\$0.00	2014
NPS	P14AC01363	Investigate Sandbar Geometries at Missouri National Recreation River	University of Wyoming	\$0.00	2014
NPS	P14AC01383	Assessment of invasion extent of Asian Swamp Eels in the Chattahoochee River	Oklahoma State University	\$75,126.00	2014

NPS	P14AC00617	Site/Feasibility Design for SCBL's Entrance	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	\$0.00	2014
NPS	P15AC00459	Aquatic Resource Monitoring at Pipestone National Monument	South Dakota State University	\$8,815.00	2015
NPS	P15AC00499	Assessment of Grassland Habitat Quality and Management Practices for Pollinators in the Southern Great Plains	Oklahoma State University	\$53,400.00	2015
NPS	P15AC00962	Alibates Flint Quarries NM Traditional Use Study (Phase I)	Texas Tech University	\$71,245.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01034	MNRR Rare plant and vegetation monitoring program	University of South Dakota	\$24,971.00	2015

NPS	P15AC01081	Anaysis and Assessment of Fire Effects Data in Parks of the Southern Plains and Chihuahuan Desert Networks	Texas Tech University	\$24,948.00	2015
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NPS	P15AC01085	Resilient Landscapes: Forest thinning and fire impacts on wildlife habitat interactions, Phase I: Restoration effects on non-native invasive plant species	Texas Tech University	\$42,300.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01147	TAPR Assess Geomorpholical Condition of TAPR Upland Prairie Stream Reaches	Kansas State University	\$23,759.68	2015
NPS	P15AC01332	Comparision of Aquatic Sampling Methods AGFO	Colorado State University	\$5,894.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01334	Monitoring of Aquatic Invertebrates at AGFO	University of Wyoming	\$8,754.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01387	TAPR Determine Implications of NonNative Stock Pond Fish at TAPR on Native Streams	Kansas State University	\$22,770.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01389	TAPR Management Plan for the Federally Endangered Topeka Shiner with TAPR	Kansas State University	\$24,750.00	2015
NPS	P15AC01605	Monitoring horseback rider use at OZAR - GPCESU	Kansas State University	\$37,771.55	2015

NPS	P15AC01750	GP CESU Coordination Agreement	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	\$17,400.00	2015
USGS	G14AC00089	Evaluating Channel Morphologic Controls on Mid-Channel Sandbar Geometry in the Lower Platte River, Nebraska	University of Wyoming	\$42,000.00	2014
USACE	W912HZ-10-20050	Didymosphenia geminata in the Kootenai River, Montana, downstream from Libby Dam - Water Chemistry	South Dakota School of Mines and Technology	\$0.00	2010
USACE	W912HZ-12-20009	Ecological Responses to the 2011 Flood Along the Missouri River: Impacts on Cottonwood Forests, Songbirds, and Landscape Change	University of South Dakota	\$0.00	2012
USBR	R10AC60040	Management of Natural History Collections from Reclamation Lands	South Dakota School of Mines and Technology	\$0.00	2010
USBR	R13AC60027	Archaeological Investigations, Fort Clark Irrigation District	University of North Dakota	\$0.57	2013

Respectfully submitted,



Larkin Powell
Professor, School of Natural Resources

Director, Great Plains CESU
September 7, 2016

With grateful thanks to Kat Bickert for her work to document projects with agencies and to develop information contained in the financial report.