



Director's Report

2023 was a very productive year for the Great Plains CESU, and as always, the year held several changes to our operation. Importantly, the Great Plains CESU staff decided to switch our annual meeting from November to January. The change allows us to better reflect on the year and provide more accurate budget and grant dollar amounts that were awarded through the network. We also held our first hybrid GP CESU Annual Meeting since prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. See more about our meeting and partner engagement below. The CESU program also held its first in person National Network meeting since 2019. The CESU Regional Directors, Federal Partners and others assembled at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia to update the group on recent activities and the future direction of our programs. This past year we had ~\$5.8 million in new agreements funded and ~\$23.2 million in modifications to agreements funded through the Great Plains CESU. Details on the projects funded from the past year are below.

Engaging Partners

The Great Plains CESU hosted our 2023 Annual Partners Meeting on January 18, 2024, as a hybrid meeting in which we engaged our partners locally and across the Great Plains. In typical fashion our agenda covered our review of the past year in our program, our recent activities and the discussion of some goals we have set for the future. We included remarks from Tom Fish from the national Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit office and representatives from many of our federal partners. We also included research talks from Jesse Bolli (NPS), Dr. Nancy Barth (USGS), and Dr. George Limpert and Dr. Dan Uden, both at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. As always, we would like to thank our federal and academic partners who participated and provided discussion at the meeting. If you have any suggestions for individuals or topics you would like covered at our next meeting, please pass them on to us at gpcesu@unl.edu.

We presently have 13 federal agency partners and 25 non-federal academic and NGO partners. If you are aware of any organizations that are interested in joining our ranks, please feel free to have them contact us at gpcesu.unl.edu.

Annual Student Award

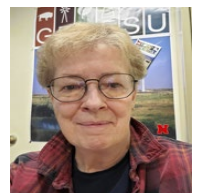


Since 2016 we have recognized a deserving individual for our Great Plains CESU Graduate Student Award. This year's recipient is Michelle Weschler, an MS student at the University of Wyoming. Michelle's thesis project focused on the impacts of wind turbines on insects. We are very thankful that her advisor, Dr. Lusha Tronstad, nominated her, and extend a huge congratulations to Michelle on behalf of the Great Plains CESU and our partners.

Please watch for an email in late summer when we will be asking both our academic and federal partners for nominations for our 2024 Great Plains CESU Graduate Student Award!

Staffing and Office Support

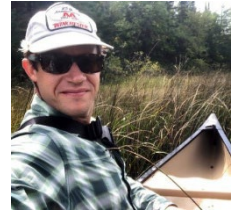
The GP CESU office remains a small and mighty force of productivity. This year we again saw turnover amongst our ranks, but thanks to the great personnel that were both off- and on-boarding we continued to move effortlessly forward. This past year Kirsten Licht, an office associate in our group, took on new challenges and resigned her post in early 2023. We were extremely fortunate to hire Barb Biffle in that post. Barb comes to us with a varied background and has expertise in various social media platforms, website design, and video editing amongst other skillsets. Please welcome Barb to our group if you haven't previously done so!





In 2023 our long-term National Park Service Coordinator Dr. Tanya Shenk retired from her post which she had occupied since February 2015. Dr. Shenk had a profound impact on the inner workings of the GP CESU and we are extremely thankful for her years of service to the unit!

Our acting Research Coordinator is Dr. Brandon Gerig. Dr. Gerig is also the Research Coordinator for the Great Rivers CESU and is officed in Columbia, Missouri. Please welcome Dr. Gerig to our team!



Dr. Paul Hanson has served as Director of the Great Plains CESU since January 2020.

The operation of our office is made possible through funds granted from multiple sources. The primary stream of funding is from annual dues from our federal partners, and we are grateful to both our dues paying partners and National Coordinator of the CESU Network, Tom Fish who distributes those funds to the regional offices. In addition, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) at the University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL) provides funding for salaries and operation of the GP CESU. We are grateful to Dr. Mike Boehm, the IANR Vice Chancellor and Dean Derek McLean for their continuing support. In addition, we appreciate Dr. Larkin Powell, Director of the School of Natural Resources, for his support and office space allocations in Hardin Hall.

New Agreements and Agreement Modifications in 2023

The following projects were documented through the Great Plains CESU’s Cooperative Agreement. It should be noted that several agencies do not consistently report their funded projects to us, therefore these values do not represent all of the projects that were funded through the Great Plains CESU in the past year. With that said, we extend a huge thanks to our partners that have been submitting their grant information to us in a timely manner.

New Agreements in 2023

Federal Agency	Agreement Number	Partner Institution	Award Amount
BLM	L23AC00644	Emporia State University	\$60,000.00
BLM	L23AC00559	South Dakota School of Mines & Technology	\$54,293.00
BLM	L23AC00654	South Dakota School of Mines & Technology	\$45,500.00
BLM	L23AC00655	South Dakota School of Mines & Technology	\$100,001.00
BLM	L23AC00671	South Dakota State University	\$32,314.85
BLM	L23AC00672	South Dakota State University	\$39,663.85
DoD-Army	W9126G-23-2-0027	Colorado State University	\$89,448.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-23-2-0043	Kansas State University	\$138,221.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-23-2-0044	Kansas State University	\$49,212.00
DoD-Marines	N62473-23-2-0017	Texas A & M Agrilife Research	\$128,449.00
DoD-Navy	N62470-23-2-0005	Colorado State University	\$434,071.67
NPS	P23AC02209	University of Wyoming	\$128,949.00
NPS	P23AC02210	University of Wyoming	\$62,000.00
NPS	P23AC02260	University of Wyoming	\$257,400.00
NRCS	NR233A750013C008	University of Wisconsin-Madison	\$1,458,558.00
NRCS	NR233A750010C004	Oklahoma State University	\$100,000.00
NRCS	NR233A750023C052	Colorado State University	\$230,000.00
NRCS	NR233A750023C019	University of Nebraska	\$54,035.00
NRCS	NR233A750023C020	Kansas State University	\$499,963.00

NRCS	NR233A750023C008	Kansas State University	\$225,000.00
NRCS	NR233A750023C054	Texas Tech University	\$491,478.00
USGS	G23AC00117	University of Oklahoma	\$30,000.00
USGS	G23AC00492	University of Oklahoma	\$249,990.00
USGS	G23AC00569	University of Oklahoma	\$215,000.00
USGS	G23AC00141	University of Nebraska	\$271,000.00
USGS	G23AC00383	University of South Dakota	\$75,000.00
USGS	G23AC00529	University of Nevada	\$260,000.00
			\$5,779,547.37

Modifications to Existing Agreements in 2023

Federal Agency	Agreement Number	Partner Institution	Award Amount
DoD-Air Force	W9126G-19-2-0018	University of Oklahoma	\$73,000.00
DoD-Air Force	W9126G-22-2-0047	Texas A & M University	\$90,000.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-19-2-0039	Colorado State University CEMML	\$1,984,997.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-19-2-0039	Colorado State University CEMML	\$3,605,615.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-19-2-0039	Colorado State University CEMML	\$14,166,042.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-19-2-0039	Colorado State University CEMML	\$759,047.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-21-2-0013	Colorado State University	\$283,313.00
DoD-Army	W9126G-21-2-0013	Colorado State University	\$1,892,438.00
NPS	P19AC00003	University of North Dakota	\$7,500.00
NPS	P21AC10808	University of Nebraska	\$141,184.00
NPS	P21AC11884	University of Nebraska	\$18,000.00
NPS	P21AC10586	Kansas State University	\$100,000.00
NPS	P17AC00128	North Dakota State University	\$27,137.29
NPS	P20AC00365	University of South Dakota	\$10,000.00

\$23,158,273.29

Respectfully submitted,



Paul Hanson
 Director, Great Plains CESU
 Professor, School of Natural Resources
 March 15, 2024