

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Charting a Course for Parks to Effectively Respond to the Challenge of Climate Change

Discipline: Social Science
Type of Project: Education
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 5/01/2008- 12/30/2011
Funding Amount: \$35,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Effectively responding to the challenge of climate change requires thoughtful and coordinated responses by NPS park and regional managers as well as national program staffs that support managers with information and technical assistance. CSU organizational communication scholars will work directly with NPS national, regional, and park staffs in outlining an effective climate change response strategy. Phase 1 will include an in-depth organizational situation assessment, in which the PI will work with the NPS to:

1. Identify current needs (e.g. scientific information, decision support tools, funding, partners) for effectively managing resources in an era of climate change (Working groups include: Legal & Policy, Planning, Science Research Monitoring & Technology, Resource Stewardship, Greenhouse Gas Mitigation and Sustainable Operations, and Education & Outreach)
2. Evaluate past performance, achievements, failures, and trends in responding to climate change.
3. Identify present and future opportunities for the NPS to build this capacity on a servicewide scale.
4. Determine the feasibility, authority, and appropriate amount of effort and resources available to implement climate change response and adaptation actions.
5. Develop a Climate Change Action Plan with short and long term goals and objectives to meet those goals.

Phase 2 will culminate in a fully developed Climate Change Response Strategy for the NPS. The strategy will provide clear direction, yet will be general enough to allow for regional variations in response and for future refinement and growth of the climate change program as the issue becomes better supported and integrated into NPS operations and planning.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- o Facilitated Working Group Meetings, and Organizational Situation Assessment,
- o List of Climate Change Action Items and Implementation Guide,
- o Analysis of Action Items Implemented,
- o Pilot Study on effective climate change communication,
- o Recommendations for Further Implementation of Agency-Wide Actions
- o Final reports of two project phases, by September 30, 2009

Keywords: Climate change, workshops, adaptation strategies, communication tools, NPS-Natural Resource Program Center, Colorado State University