Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Develop communications materials for social science, natural and cultural resource topics, management activities, and issues

Discipline: Interdisciplinary
Type of Project: Education and Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 9/15/2008- 12/31/2010
Funding Amount: $56,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:
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Project Abstract:
PURPOSE AND NEED
The purpose of this project is to provide guidance and technical support to the CESU Network and Natural Resource Program Center (NRPC) of the National Park Service, to assist with development of natural resource education and communications methods and techniques for internal and external audiences, including specific assistance with communications projects for the NRPC Water Resources Division (WRD), NRPC Biological Resource Management Division (BRMD), and NRPC Office of Education and Outreach (OEO), and the CESU Network. The project will benefit the NRPC and CESU Network program, numerous national parks and allied NPS programs in the IMR (e.g., Colorado Plateau CESU, Desert Southwest CESU, Rocky Mountains CESU, Crown of the Continent RLC, Continental Divide RLC), and other federal agency and nonfederal academic and conservation partners.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
One of the many capabilities of Colorado State University (CSU) is providing a sound foundation in natural resource communications, education and information management. This foundation includes: communications product development, education instructional design and delivery methods and techniques, networking, professional development training, publication development, and knowledge and experience in Web application programming and deployment.

CSU will provide support to the CESU Network and Natural Resource Program Center (NRPC) information infrastructure by evaluating the current developments in the academic and private educational communities concerning resource education programs and communications activities with regard to the missions of the CESU Network and NRPC programs listed above. It will make recommendations and provide support that will allow NRPC to remain on the cutting edge of natural resource education and communications, and facilitate their ability to provide educational products and services to others at the national, state and local level. Similarly, CSU will evaluate the current information resources available for the CESU Network and make recommendations and support development of mixed media information resources to help foster increased awareness and visibility of the CESU Network both within the existing community of partners and among potential new partners.

CSU's support to the CESU Network and the NRPC will vary in degree, but will include assisting NRPC and CESU Network staff with evaluating existing NPS environmental education and outreach programs and resources, developing specified educational and outreach communications materials targeting internal and external audiences--including developing text and/or scripts for various social science, cultural, and natural resource topics and educational activities and developing content and delivery materials for NPS Internet and Intranet sites and other forms of mass media that can be shared across institutional lines. In addition, based on current literature and product and service information, CSU staff may recommend programs and techniques necessary to maintain state-of-the-art educational, interpretive, and communication programs and activities, and when necessary make recommendations for additional technical expertise.

In addition, the assistance CSU will provide requires remote NPS network connectivity to support both application development and user training. Authorized CSU cooperators working under this task order will require NPS-certified remote access accounts and must adhere to established NPS information technology security guidelines. The assistance of CSU will provide may be considered security-sensitive and cooperators may be required to submit to official law enforcement background checks.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:
Due Date for Final Report and/or other Products: December 31, 2010

Keywords: Communication materials, social science, natural resources, cultural resources, NPS-Natural Resource Program Center, Colorado State University, CESU Network