

## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Provide guidance and technical support to the Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate in the evaluation and development of online natural resource communication materials for natural resource topics, management activities, and issues increase public understanding and stewardship of these resources

**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance  
**Discipline:** Social Science  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** Colorado State University  
**Effective Dates:** 8/1/2011 - 3/30/2015  
**Funding Amount:** \$408,500 [FY14: \$143,000; FY13: \$52,000; FY12: \$131,000; FY11: \$82,500]

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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Investigator: Don Zimmerman, Colorado State University, Department of Journalism and Technical Communication, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1785 (970) 491- 5674, don.zimmerman@colostate.edu

**Project Abstract:** The goal of this project is to provide guidance and technical support to the Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate (NRSS) of the National Park Service in the evaluation and development of online natural resource communications materials for internal and external audiences, including specific assistance for the NRSS Climate Change Response Program (CCRP), Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division (NSNSD), Environmental Quality Division (EQD), Water Resources Division (WRD), National Natural Landmarks (NNLs), Research Learning Centers (RLCs), Biological Resource Management Division (BRMD), and Office of Education and Outreach (OEO).

One of the many capabilities of Colorado State University (CSU) is providing a sound foundation in natural resource public communications, education, information management, and technology. This foundation includes communications product development, education instructional methods and techniques, networking, training, publication development, and knowledge and experience in Web application programming, deployment, and evaluation. CSU's Department of Journalism and Technical Communication specializes in understanding how government agencies and other organizations can share vital information on science, technology, the environment, and other applied human sciences with various audiences.

CSU will provide support to the NRSS information infrastructure. Support will vary in degree but will include assisting NRSS staff with development of text, webpages, multimedia features, and other content for the public website; written materials; and other communications products relating to natural resources. CSU's Department of Journalism and Technical Communication, which has extensive experience performing such evaluations, will assist in an evaluation of the effectiveness, accessibility, and design of the NRSS public website at [www.nature.nps.gov](http://www.nature.nps.gov). It will make recommendations and provide support that will allow NRSS to remain on the cutting edge of natural resource communication technology and facilitate the organization's ability to provide relevant information and communication materials and services to the public nationwide. Based on current literature, CSU staff may recommend programs and techniques necessary to maintain state-of-the-art online communication activities and materials and, when necessary, make recommendations for additional technical expertise.

Outcomes from this project will include websites, multimedia features, written materials, and other online communications products and approaches; reports evaluating the NRSS public website; information presentations at professional training sessions and conferences; and templates to streamline future online interpretive product development.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:** March 30, 2015

**Keywords:** communication materials, website, multi-media features, student interns, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate (NRSS) - National Park Service, Colorado State University.