

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Legacy Water Quality Data Reclamation, Digitization, and Archiving

Discipline: Natural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 8/1/2013 - 9/30/2105
Funding Amount: 97,880

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Valuable water resources data have been collected by NPS staff, contractors, cooperators, and others in or near national park units over the last 100 years. Much of these data, however, aren't readily discoverable or usable because they exist only in analog format, grey literature, and/or the dark, dusty recesses of file cabinets and shelves in locations sometimes far removed from a park. Properly documented and digitized, these legacy datasets can provide important insights into baseline conditions during the period(s) they were collected and help researchers and managers better understand current conditions. These data sources are too often relegated to disposal when, with proper collection, documentation, storage, quality assuring, and archiving, they could play a larger role beyond the purpose(s) for which they were originally collected.

Key to preserving these legacy data resources is first finding/accessing them and then obtaining sufficient metadata to document the "Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How" of the monitoring effort to enable potential users to determine whether the data are credible for their application. Some data may be unusable due to missing location or date information or because of poor or insufficient metadata. The usefulness of each dataset will be assessed before digitization and archiving proceed. If certain datasets are not deemed sufficiently credible and useful, they may not be processed/archived or may be a lower priority than more complete, better documented datasets.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: September 30, 2103

Keywords: National Park Service - Water Resources Division, Colorado State University, water data, reclamation, digitizing, archiving