

Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Make Federal Water Data Available to States and the Public

Discipline: Natural

Type of Project: Technical Assistance

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University

Student Participation: Yes

Effective Dates: 10/1/18 - 9/30/20

Funding Amount: \$184,300

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract:

- A. Project Goals - Water, in sufficient quantity and quality, is needed to sustain life. Due to persistent and pervasive water quality problems in the nation's waters, Congress, in 1972, passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (a.k.a. the Clean Water Act), and various amendments to the act thereafter, to help restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters, including the waters of the National Park System. As part of the act, Congress recognized the primary role of the states in managing and regulating the nation's water quality. Section 313 requires that all federal agencies comply with the requirements of state law for water quality management, regardless of other jurisdictional status or landownership. States protect water quality under the authority granted by the Clean Water Act through best management practices and promulgation of water quality standards. Standards are based on the state-designated uses of a water body or segment of water, the water quality criteria necessary to protect that use or uses, and an anti-degradation provision to protect the existing water quality. The goal of this project is to assist the states in managing water quality within the National Park System by making current and legacy water quality data collected by NPS staff, contractors, cooperators, and others readily available to the states in easy to use publicly accessible databases.
- B. Project Objectives - The primary objectives of this project are: (1) to identify and digitize legacy water quality datasets that describe historic (baseline) water quality conditions; (2) to digitize and document with sufficient metadata contemporary water quality datasets; (3) to upload legacy and contemporary water quality datasets to the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET Data Warehouse and the National Water Quality Monitoring Council's Water Quality Portal to make them readily available to states and the public in a common format; (4) to maintain databases and other systems that enable other data providers to make their data available to the states; and (5) to provide information on the internet about park water resources.

Keywords: Water Quality, National Park System, National Park Service, Colorado State University, Clean Water Act, Environmental Protection Agency, National Water Quality Monitoring Council, Historic Data, Digitize.