

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: "Place and Native Voice"

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Education
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Colorado at Denver
Effective Dates: 2/1/2010 - 12/31/2011
Funding Amount: \$34,023

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Christine Whitacre, National Park Service Cultural Resource Specialist, Rocky Mountains CESU, The University of Montana, Department of Anthropology, Missoula, MT 59812, Phone: 406-243-2660, FAX: 406-243-2652, christine_whitacre@nps.gov

Investigator: Lloyd Burton, University of Colorado at Denver, Graduate School of Public Affairs, Campus Box 142, P.O. Box 173364, Denver, Colorado 80217-3364, Phone: (303) 315-2482, FAX: (303) 556-5971, lloyd.burton@cudenver.edu

Project Abstract: Place and Native Voice (PNV) Project is a co-creation of The University of Colorado Denver's School of Public Affairs and the National Park Service (NPS). Founded with small project funds from the NPS Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit in 2004, the Project has both an educational and a federal workforce enhancement component.

Educationally, the PNV Project trains Native American Indian college and university students to work as cultural resource interpreters. These are students whose family, clan, or tribe has a traditional cultural or historical relationship with National Park Service facilities in the Intermountain West - a relationship with these places that pre-dates their establishment as a national park, monument, or site.

Students give interpretive presentations at the parks and monuments where they are serving as interns; and their work also appears on the PNV website in Sustainability and the Sacred - an Anthology of Teachings on Indigenous Peoples and National Parklands in the Intermountain West. This anthology also includes social science research demonstrating how some of this traditional cultural knowledge can also be seen as examples of ancient indigenous environmental policy.

Federal workforce enhancement through the PNV Project works in two ways. First, it offers a possible path to career development to the indigenous interns in the PNV Project, whose peoples are otherwise severely under-represented in federal employment. Second, the presence of these interns enhances cross-cultural understanding among other federal employees at the sites where PNV interns are working. Continued funding for the PNV Project now comes from both the CESU and from the Intermountain Regional Headquarters of the National Park Service. The PNV Project is funded in FY10 to support six (6) interns.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Final Report due September 30, 2011

Keywords: interpretive program, cultural resources, Rocky Mountains CESU, University of Colorado at Denver, Native American students, Heritage Partnerships Program, IMR Workforce Enhancement Program