

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Development of a Website for the Learning Center of the American Southwest

Discipline: Interdisciplinary

Type of Project: Education

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University

Effective Dates: June 1, 2007- September 30, 2008

Funding Amount: \$38,603

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: The Learning Center of the American Southwest is a collaborative initiative of the NPS Southern Plains, Sonoran Desert, Chihuahuan Desert, and Southern Colorado Plateau I&M networks and parks (=48 units). Based largely on the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center (<http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/index1.html>), this broad-based effort seeks to facilitate and encourage research and education in cultural and natural sciences to help achieve the NPS mandate of resource protection.

Working in conjunction with our agency and CESU partners, the Learning Center of the American Southwest builds on the conceptual groundwork and prototype website development for an internet-based "virtual" learning center component. The more recent development of this website approach has been done in close consultation with the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center so as to provide some consistency across programs and to avoid duplication of effort. The next step is to synthesize this earlier work and website into a more functional site with example products, content, and functionality that can be viewed and evaluated by all of the stakeholders, as has worked so successfully in the Yellowstone model.

The Big Sky Institute (BSI), a key partner in the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center, will have the primary responsibility for website development, whereas the NPS and CESU partners in the Learning Center of the American Southwest will provide focused content. Specifically, the Network Program Managers for the Southern Plains (Rob Bennetts), Sonoran Desert (Andy Hubbard), Chihuahuan Desert (Hildy Reiser) and Southern Colorado Plateau (Lisa Thomas) Networks will provide written content and graphics for the site, and will assist with the conceptual issues for website structure, look and feel.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: Due by September 30, 2008, Draft, multi-level website with example products and content on a live address based on the collaborative efforts of the Big Sky Institute, Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center, and the Learning Center of the American Southwest.

Keywords: Montana State University, Learning Center of the American Southwest, Sonoran Desert I&M Network, Southern Plains I&M Network, Southern Colorado Plateau I&M Network, Chihuahuan Desert I&M Network, Learning Center, website.

For Administrative Use Only:

Date Annual Report Received:

Date Final Report Received:

Publications, etc. on file: