

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Connecting Science to Visitors and Scientists to Parks: Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center, a Centennial Challenge Project

Discipline: Natural Resources

Type of Project: Education

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University

Effective Dates: 8/1/2008 - 7/1/2010

Funding Amount: \$30,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Ann Rodman, Center for Resources, PO Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190; 307-344-2216, ann_rodman@nps.gov

Investigator: John Varley, Big Sky Institute, 107 AJM Johnson Hall, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717; 406-994-5320, john_varley@montana.edu

Project Abstract: Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, the Rocky Mountains CESU, and the Greater Yellowstone I&M Network are collaborating with universities, nonprofits and other partners to develop a Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center (GYSLC). The goals of GYSLC are to connect parks, science, and people by facilitating research, promoting active partnerships, integrating science into park management, engaging citizen scientists, and providing science outreach and educational opportunities. In support of those goals, the GYSLC and Montana State University's Big Sky Institute (BSI) will work together to successfully host our first BioBlitz event. The event will bring park staff, researchers, citizen scientists, and students together to collect resource inventory data on taxonomic groups along and within some portion of the Yellowstone River. This BioBlitz will be several days long and include follow up on difficult identifications and geo-referenced data for common species. An important part of this effort will be that researchers bring their students to study with other experts. Serendipitous results include finding new, potentially invasive nonnative species and unusual phenomena. The results of this work will be used to create information products for the GYSLC website.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- 1) 15 September 2008: Project Plan to include BioBlitz dates, summary of event, schedule of events, exact location, potential list of scientific experts who will participate; event will take place in 2009
- 2) 31 October 2009: Draft Final Report submitted for review, draft information products for GYSLC
- 4) 31 December 2009: Final Report Completed, GYSLC information products completed, article for *Yellowstone Science*

Keywords: Bioblitz, Yellowstone Science, Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center, Yellowstone National Park, Montana State University