

## Support of Collaborative Natural Resource Stewardship (Tehabi)

FACILITATED BY  
Rocky Mountains  
COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT,  
Utah State University  
2003

The Tehabi program represents a partnership among Utah State University and agencies of the U.S. Department of Interior (in this case the National Park Service). The educational program begins with a two-week field course, "Field Studies in Collaborative Natural Resource Stewardship," designed to give students background in the work they will be doing during the summer. In 2003, the course was held May 11 – May 24. Students received 3 credits for the course. Students then spent the summer as interns for land management agencies. To provide a guided and effective experience the Tehabi instructor team (staff from the National Park Service, and Utah State University) worked with Field office staff to select a project which students are required to complete by summer's end. An important component of the internship is that students receive supplemental instruction and supervision through the summer from USU faculty and staff as well as mentoring from NPS staff. The focus is on helping students integrate what they learned in class with the work they are doing in the field, ensuring they are providing a quality product, and helping them resolve issues that may arise. This "safety net" is a service to the students and the offices in which they work.

Students received three course credits (Internship in Collaborative Natural Resource Stewardship) for their summer intern work. They completed a summer field workbook designed to help them think critically about the work they are doing and then to communicate their thoughts and the information they gathered. At summer's end students made presentations to agency staff that included the results of their projects, their recommendations for management alternatives, and their observations about office workings and interactions with the public. The final presentation was held at Utah State University's Bear Lake Training Center August 9 – 12.

Objectives of the program are to:

Provide the **NPS** with opportunities to:

- mentor students and pass on knowledge and experience from existing staff to potential future staff,
- have access to new information and research results from students, University faculty, and other park units
- increase accomplishments on-the ground, and
- enhance public education about protection and use of natural resources.

Provide **students** with opportunities to:

- practice skills learned in the classroom
- develop collaborative skills to improve their ability to work in an office and with a broad spectrum of stakeholders
- acquire additional skills and experience related to natural resource management
- enhance their opportunities for employment,
- to experience on-the-job mentoring and technical assistance regarding specific projects and general resource management.

## Projects:

- Project Initiation – May 26, 2003
- Final Products include: Final presentation and summary report of the internship
- Final Project date – August 15, 2003

## Project Descriptions:

- Our Great Basin NP intern performed as a team member implementing the cave management program. This involved collection of baseline data for 4 wild caves, including the mapping of physical, cultural, and biological components. The intern also performed air and water quality monitoring duties. The intern assisted in the development of a wild cave management plan for the caves surveyed. As a internship project this intern completed a summary report titled: Evaluation of the Baker Creek Area Cave and Rockshelter Management..
- At Glen Canyon NRA there were two interns. The first was responsible to manage the exotic plant control program which included maintaining Southwest Exotic Plant Mapping Project (SWEMP) and NPS databases, organizing field trips surveying for weeds, helping with data collection and data mining for weed management plans and preparing activity and progress reports. The final project results included two reports: Revised List of Exotic Plants in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and 2003 Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Marina and Lake Powell Exotic Plant Survey Report. The second intern worked primarily with terrestrial and aquatic resource monitoring. The duties focused on the wildlife program, including NPSpecies and NPS databases, field surveys, and provide field help on reptile/amphibian and leopard frog projects. Additional support was provided to the NPS Vital Signs program through data mining of Glen Canyon NRA data. The final project included reports on the reptiles and amphibians of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Both interns' time was extended because of park program needs and the outstanding performance of the interns.
- At Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS there were two interns. The first intern primarily worked with the resource manager to complete a WUI project along the park boundary (see pictures below). In addition, the intern was assigned to various ranch management and resource monitoring projects. The second intern was responsible for the synthesis of water rights data including development of Management Briefs. This product was delivered in draft form. The intern did an outstanding job of bringing together disparate information into one document.

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) – the photos below give an example of the amount of fuels that were removed from the WUI area. The Tehabi intern supervised a Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) to completion of the project.



Tehabi Intern conducting exotic weed survey and eradication of Ravenna Grass (*Saccharum ravennae*) near Wahweap Marina, Glen Canyon NRA.



Great Basin NP Tehabi Intern conducting biological and mapping survey in Halliday Cave.

