

RM-CESU - Project Completion Report, FY06

Project Title: Develop Materials for the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center

Park: Greater Yellowstone I&M Network: BICA, YELL, GRTE

Funding Sources: Rocky Mountains CESU Education Funding (\$7,500)

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University Partner, PI: Utah State University

Student Participation: Emily Yost, University of Pittsburgh

Project Description:

In 2001, the Rocky Mountains CESU, the Greater Yellowstone I&M Network (GRYN) and Yellowstone (YELL) and Grand Teton (GRTE) National Parks and Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (BICA) submitted a Natural Resource Challenge proposal for the creation of the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center (GYSLC), which was approved, but never funded. The proposal consisted of two components: on-site facilities in each park and a web-enabled “virtual” park Research Learning Center. The web-enabled virtual Research Learning Center concept is founded in the belief that all internet-using members of the public, from university researchers to primary school students, should be able to locate and access the vast amounts of scientific information that exist about YELL, GRTE, and BICA’s natural and cultural resources, appropriate to their own desired level of technical sophistication.

In 2005, Canon U.S.A., through the *Eyes on Yellowstone* program, funded development of the GYSLC website, to include hosting and content development for 10 of Yellowstone’s top natural and cultural resource topics, including grizzly bears, wolves, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, westslope cutthroat trout, geothermal features, bison, elk, the Yellowstone volcano, fire ecology, and ethnography. Money was not available for comparable efforts at GRTE and BICA. New information and outreach materials created specifically for the website include: the digital *Atlas of Yellowstone*, a state-of-the art, data-rich, visual display of information; the Resource Almanac, a one-page description of why the resource is important and its status and trend; an in-depth Overview essay that details the deep background of the resource; a description of science and management projects; *Yellowstone Science* articles; management documents available as pdf files or links; references and links to pertinent websites; and partner scientists with links to their project descriptions when available.

The intern’s primary duties were to gather materials and develop these types of products for chosen topics for GRTE and BICA. The intern was housed and worked at BICA, but interacted with staff at GRTE (including staff from the NPS-University of Wyoming Research Station housed at the AMK Ranch), staff at YELL, and staff at the GRYN I&M network. She gathered background materials on natural and cultural resource topics for GRTE and BICA, wrote draft

products, and developed some accompanying graphics and maps. The student also assisted BICA with a variety of resource management projects as an orientation to field resource projects in a National Park Service unit.

Project Results:

The intern researched and wrote drafts products for each of the following units for the Research Learning Center website, which either resulted in finished products that are available online at <http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/> or are in review by specialists and will be readied and posted to the website as they are completed, but by the end of 2007. Emily did one presentation on her work for interested park staff at BICA, and a second presentation for other Tehabi interns, instructors, and guides, plus a few NPS employees that work with Tehabi at Utah State's training center in Bear Lake, Utah.

GRYN

BICA seeps and springs almanac, overview, and projects – in review by BICA/GRYN

BICA

Home page – completed and posted

Ewing-Snell facility – completed and posted

Bighorn sheep almanac – editing one graphic then completed

BICA/YELL/GRTE combined bighorn sheep overview, references, and projects – in review by GRTE

GRTE

White Grass Ranch almanac and overview – completed, not yet posted

Bighorn sheep almanac – in review by GRTE

YELL

Bighorn sheep almanac – completed, not yet posted

Follow-up of this project:

Yellowstone staff will continue to follow up on drafts in review, incorporate comments, and get projects posted on the website as they are completed.

Publications, other reports expected/ with dates:

All of Emily's products will be posted online at <http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/> as they are completed, but by the end of 2007.

Emily also plans to write and submit an article on her work for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science's e-newsletter "Naturally Speaking" in mid-December 2006.