

Project Completion Report

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (RM-CESU)

Project Title: Development and Technical Review (NEPA and Content) of an Environmental Assessment (EA) Evaluating Management Actions Regarding the Control of Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)

Project Code: USURM-41

Type of Project (Research, Technical Assistance or Education): Technical Assistance

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Partner University: Utah State University

NPS Agreement Technical Representative (with complete contact information):

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Start Date of Project: 8/1/2007

End Date of Project: 9/30/2010

Funding Amount: \$5,000

Project Summary, including descriptions of project deliverables, work accomplished and/or major results. If the information is restricted (e.g. location of endangered species or cultural resources), indicate the title and location of the final report. Also add web sites where project-related information may be found.

The purpose of this project was to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes options for management of Beaver populations at Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site (GRKO). Gary Swant, a local ecologist working through Utah State University, utilized current park data and information and collected contemporary scientific information to draft management options.

As the project developed, additional field data and resource information was collected to facilitate plan development. Using the documents prepared, an Inter-Disciplinary Team was formed in January 2011 to initiate the NEPA process for development of the Beaver Management Plan EA. A USU student assisted with the records research, reviewed the survey protocol, and reviewed the draft management plan.

Products produced from the project include:

- Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Draft Beaver Management Plan;
- Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historical Site Survey Protocol for Beaver; and
- References of Beaver in Management Documents and Archives for Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

In addition, photopoints and GPS locations were recorded at all survey points and a GIS map was produced.

Park resource staff will utilize the products produced to bring the GRKO Beaver Management Plan EA through the NEPA process. Beaver management decisions and actions will then be guided by the plan.

The products produced exist in hard and electronic form in park resource staff files and are available for review at GRKO. A copy of the final GRKO Beaver Management Plan EA will be made available to RM-CESU upon completion of the NEPA process.

Number of students participating in this project: undergraduates, graduate students, degrees conferred.

1 graduate student – Elizabeth Szilagy