

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

RM-CESU Cooperative Agreement Number: H1200090004 (IMR)

USU Control Number: 091010

Sponsor Award Number: H1200090004; J1580090449; USU-RM-71

TITLE OF PROJECT: Science Communication Assistance

NAME OF PARK/NPS UNIT: Yellowstone National Park, Southern Plains & Greater Yellowstone Inventory & Monitoring Networks

NAME OF UNIVERSITY PARTNER: Utah State University

NPS KEY OFFICIAL/ATR:

Tami Blackford; National Park Service, PO Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming 82190; 307-344-2204; tami_blackford@nps.gov

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Mark Brunson, Utah State University, EnvS Dept. 5215 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-5215; mark.brunson@usu.edu; 435/797-2458

RESEARCHER:

Emily Yost, Utah State University, EnvS Dept. 5215 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-5215; esyost@gmail.com; 610/360-9152

University Administrative Contact: *Victoria Dutson – 435-797-1272*

PROJECT SCHEDULE AND FINAL PRODUCTS:

Date of Project Initiation: 1 September 2009

Final Products include, but are not limited to: Edited and professionally laid out science communication products for Yellowstone National Park's (YELL) Science Communications Office, the Southern Plains Network (SOPN), and the Greater Yellowstone Network (GRYN) will be produced under this Task Agreement.

All work produced by this project was provided in electronic format to the Key Official, Tami Blackford, YELL; Rob Bennetts, SOPN; and/or Cathie Jean, GRYN. Final products were in the form of agreed-upon science communication tools for Yellowstone's Science Communications Office, SOPN, and GRYN. Many of these products are available online (see below for links). A copy of the final report was emailed to the NPS RM-CESU Research Coordinator (rmcesu@forestry.umt.edu and/or kathy_tonnessen@nps.gov) and hardcopies were mailed to RM-CESU, The University of Montana, College of Forestry and Conservation, Missoula, MT 59812; and National Park Service, Technical Information Center, P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225.

End Date of Project: 30 November 2010

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The Utah State University (USU) researcher, Emily Yost, provided science writing, editing, and publishing assistance to Yellowstone National Park's (YELL) Science Communications Office, the Southern Plains Network (SOPN), and the Greater Yellowstone Network (GRYN).

Emily worked closely with Tami Blackford (Editor, Science Communication Lead at YELL), Rob Bennetts (Program Manager, SOPN), and Cathie Jean (Program Manager, GRYN) to collaboratively develop, edit, write, and lay out science communications products for each NPS partner. Science communication products included Research Learning Center content, annual and other reports, quarterly magazines, other documents, as well as providing assistance in planning a biennial scientific conference. Emily provided feedback to NPS partners about communication projects and products and worked with the NPS to cooperatively determine type and timing of project activities, and evaluate progress of work.

This project benefited the public directly by providing science outreach products to inform the public about the activities of the Yellowstone Center for Resources in YELL, the GRYN, and the park units of the SOPN. The principal investigator will be able to use this information to disseminate information about the National Park Service to the university community.

Yellowstone Science, a quarterly magazine devoted to YELL's natural and cultural resources (www.greateryellowstonescience.org/ys and <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/yellsciweb.htm>)

- Emily edited and proofed several issues of the magazine, serving as an assistant editor for issues 18(1), 18(2), and 18(3). Emily also served as graphic designer for issues 18(1) and 18(2). This work included evaluating article submissions; contributing to a new magazine department, "Shorts", by preparing, investigating, and pursuing articles; recreating the *Yellowstone Science* InDesign template with highly functional styles and master pages; updating the pre- and post-production SOPs; and brainstorming and implementing magazine webpage on Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center (GYSLC; www.greateryellowstonescience.org/ys) to further connect the two science communication efforts.

Biennial Scientific Conference and Meeting Assistance

- Served as lead planner for the planning committee and public point-of-contact for 10th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Emily was involved in nearly all aspects of conference planning; worked with hotel and conference staff, responded to inquiries, coordinated meetings, facilitated selection of program committee, maintained GYSLC website (<http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/gyesciconf2010>).
- Maintained conference SOP and guideline files for future events.
- Facilitated keynote speaker selection discussion; served as point-of-contact for keynote speakers; arranged for introductions of speakers; facilitated travel reimbursements; created all correspondence with keynote speakers; compiled keynote speaker thank you notes, gifts, and honorariums.
- Managed abstract submission and selection process; prepared abstracts for program committee to discuss and recorded discussion at program committee selection meeting; organizes selection meeting; composed and sent program committee decision letters to abstract authors; prepared draft agenda with input from Yellowstone Center for Resources staff.
- Managed logistical aspects of event; staffed conference.
- Organized independent A/V staff and conference volunteers (including two University of Wyoming students), obtained services of professional sound company and worked with staff.
- Created all conference materials including call for papers, conference program, information packets for conference participants, name tags, etc.
- Supported efforts to make conference presentations more widely available. Obtained services from graduate student at Montana State University's film department. Student will help get conference video taken by park staff into a format that can be posted on GYSLC website and preserved.

Miscellaneous Communication and Editorial Assistance Provided

- Provided support for University of Montana Native American Internship Program and Yellowstone Park Foundation interns.
 - Hosted internship program expert from Rocky Mountain National Park
 - Drafted a job description for University of Montana intern
 - Prepared and printed workbooks and materials for both interns
 - Developed *Yellowstone Science* interview for University of Montana intern
- Edited, proofed, provided lay out assistance, or reviewed numerous reports and other documents including
 - Poster for 10th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem
- Provided technical assistance to YCR, park, network, and other NPS staff upon request
- Responded to public information requests on behalf of YELL Science Communication
- Provided input to YELL peers participating in Stepping Up to Supervision course
- Provided miscellaneous climate change communication assistance

GYSLC (www.greateryellowstonescience.org)

- Performed content maintenance:
 - Drafted content about World Heritage Program in Yellowstone (overview, references and links, Yellowstone FAQs, Yellowstone timeline).
- Maintained workshop and conference web pages
- Provided feedback to and participated in national RLC web team group

The NPS and USU provided training for the researcher. Emily successfully completed advanced training in the use of Microsoft Office and mandatory NPS safety, IT, and radio training. Emily incorporated this knowledge into her work.

RECOMENDATIONS:

1. Obtain and implement an ISSN for *Yellowstone Science* (<http://www.issn.org/>). ISSNs make it easier for librarians to track publications.
2. Recommendations for Biennial Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem are incorporated in the conference SOPs and guidelines.
3. Make sure YELL Science Communication Office staff is up-to-date and following SOPs on pre- and post-production of *Yellowstone Science*. With multiple people working on files, it is important that some key actions are performed in the same way.
4. Encourage staff to be familiar with *Yellowstone Science* style guide. It is an easy way for new staff to get up-to-speed, and for the team to edit more consistently and efficiently. As a new “staff member” it was frustrating to come on and edit without guidelines or there be undocumented exceptions/preferences.
5. Host interns in YELL’s Science Communication Office to develop capacity for science communication work. Consider allowing non-traditional interns (e.g., graduate students working remotely). Pursue student help with *Yellowstone Science* “Shorts.”
6. Create central database for YELL photos with metadata. There are several locations where digital photos are located in Yellowstone. To exhaust the park’s resources, you must check the online slide file with descriptions (though it cannot be searched), the slide file on the park’s network, and the Science Communication office’s files. This search can be extended to the park museum (staff must perform this search), the Harper’s Ferry Historic Photo Collection, the NPS digital image archive, individual park websites, and other resources. Searching within each of these sources is time consuming and often the best photos are stored on individual staff hard drives.

Photos are important communication and research tools. The photos would be more accessible and useful if they were put in a system that multiple users can upload files to, with metadata, including copyright information. This database should be searchable by everyone, though not everyone may be able to reach the photos. This could be a future function of the GYSLC and LCAS, as many photos are turned up in research for other learning center content.
7. Consider expanding *Yellowstone Science* coverage to “Greater Yellowstone Science” coverage. Actively pursue authors/articles.

8. Continue to pursue a better electronic presence for *Yellowstone Science*. Develop a better functioning *Yellowstone Science* website on the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center that is searchable. Users should have the ability to download individual articles. Consider allowing readers to manage subscriptions online similar to *Park Science*.
9. Develop formal author submission guidelines for *Yellowstone Science* and make them available on the *Yellowstone Science* website.
10. Develop a highly functional conference proceedings website on GYSLC and LCAS. Develop ability to download individual articles, search articles.
11. NPS messaging/branding is not implemented in the YCR. Consider adopting these elements to show YELL's connection with other NPS units and the NPS as a whole. YCR branding, as it is, could be more consistent. Documents produced by YCR should all citation information in the document and should not appear only in the suggested citation.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COPIES OF REPORT OR PRODUCTS, CONTACT:

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Researcher: Emily Yost, Utah State University, EnvS Dept. 5215 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-5215; esyost@gmail.com; 610/360-9152