

Project Completion Report Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (RM-CESU)

Project Title: Science Communication Assistance

Project Code (such as UMT-72 and/or the “J” number): J2122107010, USURM-87
USU Control No. 110006

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

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Partner University: Utah State University

NPS Agreements Technical Representative (with complete contact information): Robert Bennetts; Program Manager, National Park Service, Southern Plains Network, Capulin Volcano National Monument, PO Box 40, Des Moines, NM 88418; 719/846-4663; robert_bennetts@nps.gov

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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

Start Date of Project: August 1, 2010

End Date of Project: December 31, 2011

Funding Amount: \$41,190

Number of Students Involved, and Type of Student (Undergraduate, Graduate, Post Doctorate): 0

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.

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

Emily worked closely with Robert Bennetts (Program Manager, SOPN) and Tami Blackford (Editor, Science Communication Lead at YELL) and to collaboratively develop, edit, write, and lay out science communications products for each NPS partner. Science communication products included annual and other reports, Research Learning Center content, quarterly magazines, and other documents. 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 SOPN and the Yellowstone Center for Resources in YELL. The principal investigator will be able to use this information to disseminate information about the NPS to the university community.

Natural Resource Publications Series Reports

Through this agreement, Emily:

- Prepared, edited, and formatted 2010 annual land bird reports for the SOPN, Sonoran Desert Network, and the Chihuahuan Desert Network. Emily created numerous tables (over 30) from data, updated text, worked with data managers (NPS and RMBO), incorporated reviewers comments, and published on the Learning Center of the American Southwest (LCAS). Reports re approximately 80 pages each.
- Prepared, edited, and formatted Capulin Volcano Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA). Attempted to resolve pre-existing formatting issues and manage what would become a lengthy, complex Adobe InDesign document. Emily worked with NPS staff and contractors to complete layout of document while it was still in the draft stages. Work included editing text and tables, formatting tables and graphics, and managing 23 InDesign documents in book form. Report was approximately 260 pages at last count.
- Prepared, edited, and formatted 2010 SOPN exotic plant report. Emily worked with network staff to publish this document that includes numerous tables and graphics and incorporated review comments. Report is approximately 150 pages.
- Prepared annual SOPN grassland report for publication in series, including editing, working with tables and graphics (126 pages)
- Edited and formatted Resource Stewardship Strategy for Pecos National Historical Park in Microsoft Word. Worked collaboratively with university cooperator (author). Approximately 160 pages.
- Prepared Pecos National Historical Park NRCA for publication. Edited, attempted to fit draft to NRCA guidance, worked with park staff and NRCA project leader to address author comments and NRCA program concerns. Provided constructive criticism on content of report and fit with the NRCA series. Approximately 220 pages.
- Prepared Fort Union National Monument NRCA for publication. Edited, attempted to fit draft to NRCA guidance, worked with park staff and NRCA project leader to address author comments and NRCA program concerns. Added missing chapters using existing monument materials. Provided constructive criticism on content of report and fit with the NRCA series. Approximately 140 pages.
- Prepared draft of annual resource report for parks (“year in review”) prototype using Chickasaw National Recreation Area as an example on short notice.

Miscellaneous Communication and Editorial Assistance Provided to SOPN

Through this agreement, Emily:

- Prepared draft of exotic plant species resource brief for publication on LCAS website. Incorporated network comments.
- Prepared draft of exotic plant species project summary for publication on LCAS website. Incorporated network comments.

Communication and Editorial Assistance Provided to YELL

Through this agreement, Emily:

- Edited and proofed several issues of the magazine, serving as an assistant editor for issues 18(3), 19(1), and 19(2). This work included evaluating article submissions; contributing to the magazine department, “Shorts”, by preparing, investigating, and pursuing articles; preparing issues for mailing, and attaching the magazine’s article citations to reference topics on the Greater Yellowstone Science Learning Center (GYSLC; www.greateryellowstonescience.org/ys) website to further connect the two science communication efforts.
- Evaluated layout of 10th Biennial Scientific Conference on the GYE conference proceedings by cooperator.
- Edited, formatted, and designed layout for final wolverine project report, arranged for printing, approved proofs, published on GYSLC website.
- Edited and formatted 2010 wolf report. Worked with authors and gained necessary approvals. Arranged for printing.

- Edited, proofed, provided lay out assistance, or reviewed numerous reports and other documents including
 - Fishing Bridge Administrative History Report (also investigated printing options)
 - Revised research permit office submission for 2009 YCR annual report
 - Updated science communication team and unglates submissions for 2010 YCR annual report

Recommendations:

1. The official SOPN website appears to have not been updated since 2006 and there is no note directing users to the LCAS website, where most of the network's publications reside. On the LCAS website, I&M reports are nested under the projects tab under a specific topic. Emily did not intuitively look for the reports in this location. The results of the site's search engine often do not include the reports I am searching for an require some deciphering.
2. The various ways each network is referred to should be synonymous in the search engine. Currently, a search for "SOPN" will not produce the same results as "Southern Plains Network," "Southern Plains I&M Network," or "Southern Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network."
3. Draft documents intended for final publication using InDesign using Microsoft Word. If preparing an InDesign document, be sure to use the current template and ensure that you have functioning table styles, TOC styles, etc. Allowing multiple people to work on the same InDesign document can be problematic for formatting issues.
4. Consider the benefits of using Adobe InDesign vs. Microsoft Word. Protocols should be formatted in Word, as the content is typically revised semi-regularly.
5. Conduct a thorough, independent, objective evaluation of how the GYSLC/LCAS websites are used and by whom. Consider statistics on what is being downloaded and time spent on individual pages. No thorough, objective evaluation of the website has been conducted to date.

All work produced by this project was provided in electronic format to the Key Official, Robert Bennetts, SOPN, and/or Tami Blackford, YELL.