

**Project Summary**  
**Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title: Preparing Natural Resource Condition Assessments (NRCAs) for Seven Intermountain Region Park Units**

**Discipline:** Natural  
**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** Utah State University  
**Effective Dates:** 7/1/2015 - 6/30/2019  
**Funding Amount:** \$443,621

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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**Project Abstract:** The NPS is implementing individual natural resource condition assessment (NRCA) for Sunset Crater NM, Wupatki NM, Walnut Canyon NM, Golden Spike NHS, Cedar Breaks NM, Bryce Canyon NP, and Capitol Reef NP (hereafter referred to as "parks"). This agreement describes the scope and tasks associated with preparing an NRCA for these parks. The NRCA will be developed collaboratively between NPS and USU. The NRCA will focus on a subset of important park natural resources and resource management topics. The assessment will evaluate and report on current conditions, critical data and knowledge gaps, and describe resource threats and stressors of concern to park resource managers.

The project is a snapshot-in-time evaluation of resource condition for the most important subset of park resources. Project scope is comprehensive in that a wide range of biotic, abiotic, landscape, and ecological resources and interactions will be considered, and that conditions will be evaluated for selected critical ecological components for each park unit. The goals are to develop information that assists park managers in efforts to develop near-term management priorities, engage in watershed and landscape scale partnerships and education efforts, conduct park planning, and report program performance.

The project will compile, evaluate, and synthesize existing scientific information from multiple sources, and expert judgment from an interdisciplinary team of specialists, the project will assist NPS in defining specific park priorities. The project objectives include: characterize park biological and physical resource conditions at appropriate scales; define threat and stress factors and their relationship to identified resources; identify critical data gaps; and suggest data collection or resource investigations to address those gaps. Resource conditions, threats, and stressors will be evaluated and depicted spatially (to the extent possible) to facilitate use of project findings in a wide variety of park decision and planning processes, and for use in park reporting to the Department of Interior's Strategic Plan land health goals.

**Keywords:** Intermountain Region Parks, Utah State University, science writing, editing services, Natural Resource Condition Assessments