

MEETING SUMMARY
Great Plains CESU Manager's Committee Meeting
Thursday March 6th, 2003
8:30 am – 4:00 pm.
East Campus Union, University of Nebraska –Lincoln

Last December we asked the technical representatives of each our partner federal agencies to select two individuals from within their organization to serve on the Manager's Committee. These individuals would serve as the core unit of the committee, while other agency representatives can be involved as well as appropriate. This was the first meeting of the GPCESU Manager's Committee. A draft work plan for FY-03 was presented at the meeting and the following is a summary of the key discussions. A final Work Plan was OK'd by the Manager's Committee at the conclusion of the meeting.

Overview of CESU Network and Great Plains CESU

www.cesu.org/cesu and <http://greatplains.cesu.unl.edu>

CESU Network is a Federal/University partnership to enhance research, education, and technical assistance

- The current CESU network consists of 12 distinct units divided by biogeographic regions throughout the United States (Chesapeake Watershed, Colorado Plateau, Desert Southwest, Great Basin, Great Lakes-Northern Forest, Great Plains, Gulf Coast, North Atlantic Coast, Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain, South Florida/Caribbean, and Southern Appalachian Mountains). Up to 5 new CESUs (Californian, Hawaii-Pacific Islands, North & West Alaska, Piedmont-South Atlantic Coast, and Upper and Middle Mississippi Valley) may be added in FY03.

- The Great Plains CESU is a cooperative venture between 11 universities (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Colorado State University, Langston University, Little Priest Tribal College, South Dakota State University, Texas A&M University, University of Minnesota, University of North Dakota, University of Oklahoma, University of South Dakota, and University of Wyoming), and 5 federal agencies (BLM, BOR, NPS, USFS, and USGS-BRD).

- The number of projects coming through the GPCESU increased from 15 in fy2001 to 31 in fy2002. In combined FY, the majority of projects are biological (24), but other disciplines are also represented (physical=5, social=5, cultural=7, and interdisciplinary=5). **It is important to recognize that this is not just a biological/ecological unit, but work with all disciplines and concepts!**

- **See if there is interest from other agencies to join GPCESU? Some key possibilities: EPA, USFWS, NRSC, Army Corps of Engineers (not a national partner)**

Discussion/review of work plan items:

• **Complete GPCESU Strategic Plan**

- it is important to note that the strategic themes do not restrict potential projects
- engineering & design needs to be more explicitly included within one of the themes (could be 3, 5, or 8)
- include adaptive management of ecosystems
- how do cultural resource needs get met? Include cultural history of great plains (maybe under 5)
- enhance education – under strategic directions
- need to insure that each of the participating agencies needs are included in the plan

• **Organize a GPCESU Manager's Committee and hold a meeting of the committee to write an annual Work Plan**

• **Finish initial phase of the NPS research needs catalog and initiate similar activities within BOR, BLM, USGS, and USFS**

- One objective of the CESUs is to provide research, technical assistance, and education to the agencies. It provides the opportunity to deliver science to the agencies – for the GPCESU to do this effectively we need to identify the science priorities and research needs of the agencies.
- The GPCESU can provide a link between agency information needs and those who perform research i.e. partner university faculty and other agency scientists.
- Example: with the park service, organized and readily accessible information on park research, technical assistance and education needs does not exist currently, so we are generating a Research Needs Catalog for parks within the GP region. Phase 1: provide a list of the parks on the website, along with a list of information needs for that park based on the PMIS database. These project titles are not necessarily funded. Phase 2: complete a more

comprehensive list of research needs based on management issues for all parks within the Great Plains Region.

- Feel it is important to get similar information from the other agencies readily available.
- BOR: have 84 facilities (reservoirs/impoundments) within GP region. Could possibly come up with needs for each, and also some that apply region-wide.
- BLM: each field office generates projects that go to a budget team for priority. Needs could be submitted by each field office.
- Research needs from the other agencies (BOR, BLM at least) requested by May 15, 2003.

- **Continue development of the GPCESU web page emphasizing an expanded directory of university faculty and science agency expertise**

- Federal agencies may want to list technical centers, laboratories, etc. instead of actual names
- Park managers appear to want names of actual contacts
- Depends on agency

- **Institute a GPCESU administrative process for tracking progress on projects**

- Database is mainly for internal audience, to help develop statistics on how much money has gone through GPCESU, what each university has, and what each agency has supported, etc.
- Change Park (when applicable) to Location and include information for the other projects. Add location of park as well.
- Projects initiated by agencies will be tracked by the agency (quarterly reports, etc) Final report must be provided to GPCESU as well.
- Request names of contracting type people at each agency to help keep track of what projects have been initiated under the CESU.

- **Archive agency project initiation protocols on GPCESU web page**

- Handout of NPS project initiation protocol
- A project is a Modification to the Agreement and it includes:
 - o Scope of Work (must show substantial involvement by agency)
 - o Budget
 - o Project Summary Form
- Peer review – right now NPS makes sure that at least 2 people review the project scope of work. Concern over how appropriate peer review can be accomplished due to heavy workload. It would be possible for agencies to review other agency proposals. The expertise list is a good way to find appropriate individuals for review.
- Up to funding agency to determine level of peer review necessary depending on level of project.

- **Develop one GPCESU proposal for a project that involves Langston University and/or Little Priest Tribal College**

- NPS may have a project to initiate with Langston and George Washington Carver, are planning a trip to Langston in spring
- Langston has the Center for Grasslands Excellence, good agricultural program, goat research (possible project to control exotics?), natural resource management as well.
- It will take effort on our part to include LPTC, Langston in projects.

- **Update the GPCESU poster and information brochure before national CESU Network meeting**

- **Work with the CESU National Coordinator to develop a strategy for long-term funding of GPCESU administrative support**

- initial support provided by one-time contributions by each agency (10K); these funds also used for initial and subsequent annual meetings, operating, and web site development
- evident that this position is necessary in order to run the CESU
- ideas for future funding:
 - o agencies could come up with project funds for resource needs catalog (like NPS) – this is short term solution however
 - o partner universities provide 1-2% of indirect to UNL for serving as host (cost of business)
 - o increase overhead at national level, stipulating that the difference goes to GPCESU directly for administrative support
 - o automatically build into budget of each project

- If National Council approves increased funding, national level support could be affiliated to each unit (ie similar to initial funding)
- Needs to be addressed at national meeting (letter from UNL to get on agenda at meeting)
- **Produce color-coded map of federally managed lands in Great Plains region**
 - need to gather maps from each agency showing the lands they manage within the region.
 - CALMIT can help produce?
- **Develop proposal for a cross-cutting, multi-agency project**
 - Don't know how to do this exactly
 - Having the research needs lists would help identify common issues among the agencies
 - Missouri River Adaptive Management program
 - Opportunities for BLM and NPS to partner up
- **Insure National CESU Network meeting is well attended**
 - June 24 – 25th, Washington DC
- **Additional items**

Participants

Kyle Hoagland – GPCESU Director; Interim Director, School of Natural Resource Sciences, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Christine Lockert – UNL Coordinator, GPCESU, UNL

Gary Willson – GPCESU Research Coordinator, UNL, Midwest Region, NPS

Steve Cinnamon – Chief of Natural Resources, Midwest Region, NPS

Steve Miller – Park Manager, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, NPS

Jeff Lucero – Hydrologist, Water Resources Group, BOR

Dan Lechefskey – Group Leader, Environmental & Land Services Group, BOR

Bill Hill – Manager, Newcastle Field Office (Wyoming), BLM

Michele Schoeneberger – Project Leader, National Agroforestry Center, USFS (Research Division)