



Great Lakes - Northern Forest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Network Connections

An update of activities from the Great Lakes – Northern Forest CESU

June 2005

2005 National Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Units Meeting Highlights

Overview of the Meeting:

A national meeting of all 17 Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Units (CESU) was held in Washington, DC June 21-22, 2005. There was a full agenda both days, with 140 people attending, all CESUs were represented.

Three national awards were given out; two were awarded for innovative use of the CESU Network and one was awarded for significant contributions to the development of the CESU Network. Five projects were featured highlighting the collaborative and innovative nature of the CESU Network.

State of the CESU's:

A brief update was given regarding the state of the CESU's as a whole. Four agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and U.S. Geological Survey have joined all the CESUs. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is letting their participation lapse while they re-evaluate their overall cooperative agreement structure. The Department of Energy is withdrawing their participation. Two new agencies joined the CESU Network, The Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The first round of CESU host university renewals have been completed successfully. The second round is currently finishing their renewal process. The Great Lakes–Northern Forest CESU will be up for renewal during the fourth round in the fall of 2006.

The state of CESU Administrative Funding:

The issue of funding was a key component that came up during nearly every session at the national meeting. Dr. Perry Brown, Dean College of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Montana and Coordinator for the Rocky Mountain CESU lead the session dedicated to CESU funding.

For more information on the National CESU Meeting, visit:

[www.cesu.org/
network/05mee
ting.html](http://www.cesu.org/network/05meeting.html)

For questions regarding the administrative funding discussion, please contact Raelynn Jones Loss at:

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The state of CESU Administrative Funding Cont'd:

While the virtual network is a great idea, there still needs to be someone in an office to move agreements through, keep expertise information up-to-date, answer questions, etc. The need for money to support this assistance lead to several funding ideas. The most prominent idea was to join together to call for national funding.

The National Park Service is very supportive of the CESU Network and would be happy to serve as an avenue which congress could route funding through. Their support will help us build a case through the agency, while working on building a case with congressional staff. We discussed the need for a lobbyist who will constantly be in D.C. promoting the CESU Network. We also discussed the reality that if federal funding does not come through, the CESU offices could cease to exist because host universities cannot continue to support them.

A decision was made to move forward on this issue with a small working group. Seven people agreed to assist Perry in solidifying support and moving forward.

Power Point presentations from these agencies, are available on the National CESU website:

www.cesu.org

Research Needs Identified by Agencies at the National Meeting by GLNF CESU Partner Agencies



Bureau of Land Management

- Environmental impacts of energy development.
- Invasive species, especially cheat grass, pinion juniper invasion into sagebrush, yellow star thistle.
- Abandoned minelands.
- Prolonged drought in the west and declining sea ice.
- Special status species (threatened, endangered, etc.), and impacts of energy development on them.
- Methane hydrates as possible energy sources.
- How people affect resources and how resources affect people.
- Public involvement.
- Changing climate, permafrost, melting glaciers, retreat of ice from arctic coast.
- Air quality and visibility associated with energy development.
- Wild horse ecology and management (i.e. population control).
- Coal bed hydrology and geology.
- Planning and resources assessment.

Contact information for our partners can be found at:

www.cnr.umn.edu/cesu/partners



U.S. Forest Service

- Improving watershed conditions.
- Help meet energy resource needs through biomass, bioenergy and biofuels.
- Create new programs to support private land conservation.
- Better position the U.S. in global forestry markets through market based approaches to ecosystem services and forest products.
- Four key areas of research development: water & air monitoring, species inventory & monitoring, fire & fuels, invasive species.



U.S. Geological Survey

- Animal to human diseases.
- Wildlife conservation and habitat conservation and management.
- Genetically modified organisms and their impact on the natural environment.
- Threatened and endangered species research.
- Ecologically available water.
- Carbon sequestration.
- Climate change
- Fire change and mercury and flame retardants in the environment.
- Information sharing.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

- Transition from research to operations agency.
- Characterize uncertainty of model forecasts for weather, climate and natural hazards.
- Increase computing capability to handle the amount of information gathered by NASA daily.
- Evolving earth-sun system portal.

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Ideas, concerns or questions?

Contact our office at:

raelynn@umn.edu

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National Park Service

- Air resources – acoustics, night skies, regional issues.
- Water resources – altered water qualities, fishery management practices, contaminants, restoration.
- Biological resources – fragmentation, feral animals, ecosystem health, disease, overpopulation, fading forests.
- Cultural resources – baseline documentation, environmental history, landscape scale histories, national register documentation.
- Inventory & monitoring – data analysis of past studies, remote sensing, public science communication.
- Social sciences – modeling visitor flow, subsistence use.

NPS also had a list of suggestions for Universities looking for research dollars and contacts:

- Market yourself.
- Work to find funding outside federal government.
- Provide agency with list of expertise.

More information about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can be found at:

<http://www.usace.army.mil/>



Natural Resources Conservation Service

The NRCS was not represented at the National Meeting. An update to their needs will be sent out in the near future.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of joining the Great Lakes-Northern Forest CESU. We will be one of the first CESUs the Corps joins.

- System-wide (rivers) watershed information.
- Total watershed impacts of proposed and past development.
- Everglades restoration.
- Northern Mississippi restoration.

If you have an idea for upcoming newsletters, please email us at:

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