



University of Nevada, Reno

Great Basin Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (GB CESU)

Federal Managers Quarterly Meeting

Virtual meeting Monday, April 12 9:00-10:00 am (PDT)

Agency (alphabetical) & Representative Present: (Agricultural Research Service) Snyder, K; (Bureau of Reclamation) Clifton, N; (Department of Defense) Galli-Noble, E; (GB CESU) Armbruster, K; (GB CESU) Busha, C; (GB CESU) Itani, A; (Forest Service) Chambers, J; (Forest Service) Yelenik, S; (National CESU) Fish, T; (National Park Service) Ainsworth, A; (National Park Service) Louter, D; (PNW CESU) Bresee, T; (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) Tull, J; (U.S. Geological Survey) Ricca, M

Welcome and Introductions

GB CESU Director, Ahmad Itani welcomed the federal managers and thanked them for their time and commitment to the GB CESU. This is the beginning of quarterly meetings for federal partners to increase communication and improve the services of the GB CESU.

Science Advisor of the GB CESU and National Parks (NPS) Senior Scientist, Ali Ainsworth spoke about a renewed interest in Cooperative Agreements since the December GB CESU Annual meeting as the NPS has processed fourteen cooperative agreements and modifications for this year, compared to three from last year.

Update on GB CESU

New website with updated project lists, funding opportunities and experts database to connect federal partners to new talents at the various academic institutions. The GB CESU has submitted the renewal application for the University of Nevada, Reno as host institution. There is a strategic plan task force chaired by Dr. Jeanne Chambers to update the vision, mission, objectives and metrics for the next 5 years. Dr. Chambers values your input into the plan and if you are not on the planning committee you can submit your input to [Jeanne Chambers](#).



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National CESU Update

National Coordinator, Tom Fish provided national updates, an additional 17th federal partner has been added to the CESU, Department of Energy, Western Area Power Administration. It is unknown at this time which CESU's they intend to work with.

The host university application is pending review and determination by the CESU Council, expected late April, 2021 and depending on decision new agreements will go into effect for the next 5 years 2021-2026.

Save the date, June 19-24, 2022 for the National CESU meeting at [National Conservation Training Center](#) in Shepherdstown, WV (Dependent on gathering guidelines).

Funding Opportunities

Proposal Capture Manager, Carrie Busha, introduced a new [funding opportunities](#) tab on the website to share funding opportunities for federal partners to research and educational needs.

Open Discussion

There was discussion about the benefit of single agency posting funding opportunities, as some federal partners already identify their experts and utilize the CESU to develop their projects and agreements. It was clarified that posting requirements can vary by agency, in which opportunities or requests for interest must be posted before collaboration. This new website function can be helpful for this purpose.

There was an interest to have multi-agency RFP's that cross regional program boundaries and jurisdictions to develop potential for larger national RFP's and the CESU can serve as a mechanism to bring agencies and institutions together to compete. PIVOT is a funding opportunity database that can be used to seek out funding opportunities.

It was suggested to use webinars, training or lightning talks to help build relationships and communications between agencies and institutions. The topics could be based on the strategic needs with white papers were suggested as way synthesize research needs and provide input into larger national collaborative RFPs.

There was discussion about the CESU as an avenue to leverage experts at institutions that agencies otherwise do not have access to as they do not have the resources "in house." It is challenging to compare regional differences as there are different political will and priorities and the previous national administration made it challenging with review processes to get projects funded. There is a renewed hope that projects will be more successful in the coming years.



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There is content in the previous strategic plans of critical management and research needs and can be reviewed and renewed. Director Itani thanked the federal managers for their time at the quarterly meeting.