

2011 NPS George Melendez Wright Climate Change Fellowship Program



ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

Submitted by the University of Washington
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2011 NPS GEORGE MELENDEZ WRIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The University of Washington College of the Environment was pleased to assume co-sponsorship of the 2011 National Park Service George Melendez Wright Climate Change Fellowship in fall of 2010. Lisa Graumlich, Dean of the College of the Environment, had been the Principal Investigator for the inaugural year of the program (2010) while at the University of Arizona as Director of the School of Natural Resources and Environment.

Program Accomplishments:

The first steps taken to establish the program included setting up a website and creating a comprehensive database system using Filemaker Pro for managing the application, review, and selection processes for the fellowships. The program announcement was disseminated widely throughout the United States using networks of university and college deans, student advisors, student professional programs, conferences and meetings, the George M. Wright Society, NCSE, etc. The Parks distributed it widely through their networks including the CESUs, and internal NPS communications. Over 85 students completed applications by February 4, 2011, each required to submit a 10-page proposal including an abstract, a project narrative, budget, budget justification, references, and resume. They were required to request at least two academic letters of recommendation, including their advisor, and a letter of support from their NPS sponsor(s). Ultimately 60 students were forwarded for review.

In order to determine the expertise that the reviewers would need in order to rank them, the proposals were categorized into themes (i.e., human dimensions, plant ecology, biology, landscape ecology, hydrology, paleoecology, etc.) Reviewers with the necessary knowledge and expertise were then recruited, sixteen from the NPS and sixteen non-NPS, primarily from academic institutions. Each student proposal was assigned three reviewers with one being a NPS employee.

The reviewers used an online system that interfaced with the database so that they could access all of the students' documents, read, review, and indicate their critique of the proposal by answering seven questions that are on a likert scale about quality, feasibility, and relevance. They also had the opportunity to add comments if they chose.

The database was used to generate reports of the rankings that were then reviewed by the program leadership at NPS and the UW. By April 21, 2011, eleven students were selected and awarded fellowships totaling \$199,918. (See **appendix A.**)

The fellows' research projects geographical range includes six NPS regions:

- AKR (2)
- IMR (4)
- PWR (4)
- SER (1)
- MWR (1)
- NER (1)

The program administrator tracked the fellows' progress and fielded any questions from the students' regarding their awards and their research. Where necessary, she interfaced with the fellows' institutions to ensure that their award accounts were set up to meet the fellowship requirements and approved any changes to their budgets. She generated reports from the database and maintained all relevant student and program documents.

Students were required to submit Research Status Reports indicating their progress and a timeline for completion of their research and project deliverables. A majority of the fellows will be continuing their work through 2012, taking advantage of another field season to conduct their research. (See separate document for the Status Reports.)

Expenditures:

Students received their first award allocations (75%) for a total disbursement of \$149,938. They will receive the final 25% of their award after they have submitted a draft of their Final Research Report (fall of 2012). (See appendix B for expenditure report.)

Leveraged Funding:

Sarah Bisbing:

- Gloria Barron Wilderness Society Fellowship: Conserving the adaptive potential of western forests: Using range-wide patterns of genetic population structure and niche modeling to predict the response of *Pinus contorta* to climatic change, \$10,000. 2012 – 2013

Kirsten Feifel:

- Processing of the Olympic Coast sediment cores was completed with the help of an undergraduate assistant. He was awarded a \$4,000 Mary Gates Research Scholarship through the Mary Gates Endowment at the University of Washington to support his research efforts.
- Support from the GMW Climate Change Fellowship provided the catalyst for my research. In 2011, I was awarded an NSF IGERT on Ocean Change, which provides me with two years of support (~\$64,000) and tuition (~\$30,000) to complete the research that I have started under the GMW Fellowship

Christopher Jury:

- Preparation and funding via the GMWCCFP was very helpful in securing additional funding through the UH Sea Grant College Program (see status report). UH Sea Grant is providing funding of \$61,438 which is enhanced by a 50% non-federal in-kind match.

Lauren Oakes:

- Gloria Barron Scholarship, The Wilderness Society
- Morrison Institute for Population and Resource Studies
- USDA Forest Service, Forest Health
- Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources
- Stanford School of Earth Sciences
- National Forest Foundation

Kristie Wendelberger:

- Florida International University Kelly Tropical Botany Scholarship: \$500.
- National Science Foundation, Florida Coastal Everglades Long-term Ecological Research, Research Experience for Undergraduates: \$8,000.