



Chesapeake Watershed CESU
University of Maryland Center for
Environmental Science
www.chwacesu.org



Dr. Dan Filer Co-Director & Research Coordinator (NPS)



Rhonda Schwinabart Outreach Coordinator (UMCES-AL)



Katie Kline Website / Database development (UMCES-AL)



Dr. Matt Fitzpatrick Director & Professor (UMCES-AL)

Dr. Dan Filer – CESU Co-Director & Research Coordinator (NPS)
Rhonda Schwinabart – Outreach Coordinator (UMCES-AL)
Katie Kline – Website / Database Development (UMCES-AL)
Dr. Matt Fitzpatrick – CESU Host Director (UMCES-AL)



Chesapeake Headwaters | Source: MCF



Chesapeake Watershed CESU Research Network Program Update

Topics

- Growth of the Network
- National Program Update
- Experts Database Update
- NPS Fellowship Update
- Interactive Project Map App
- DEIJA Statement and Action Plan
- CESU Student Award Process and 2024 Selections

Growth of the Network

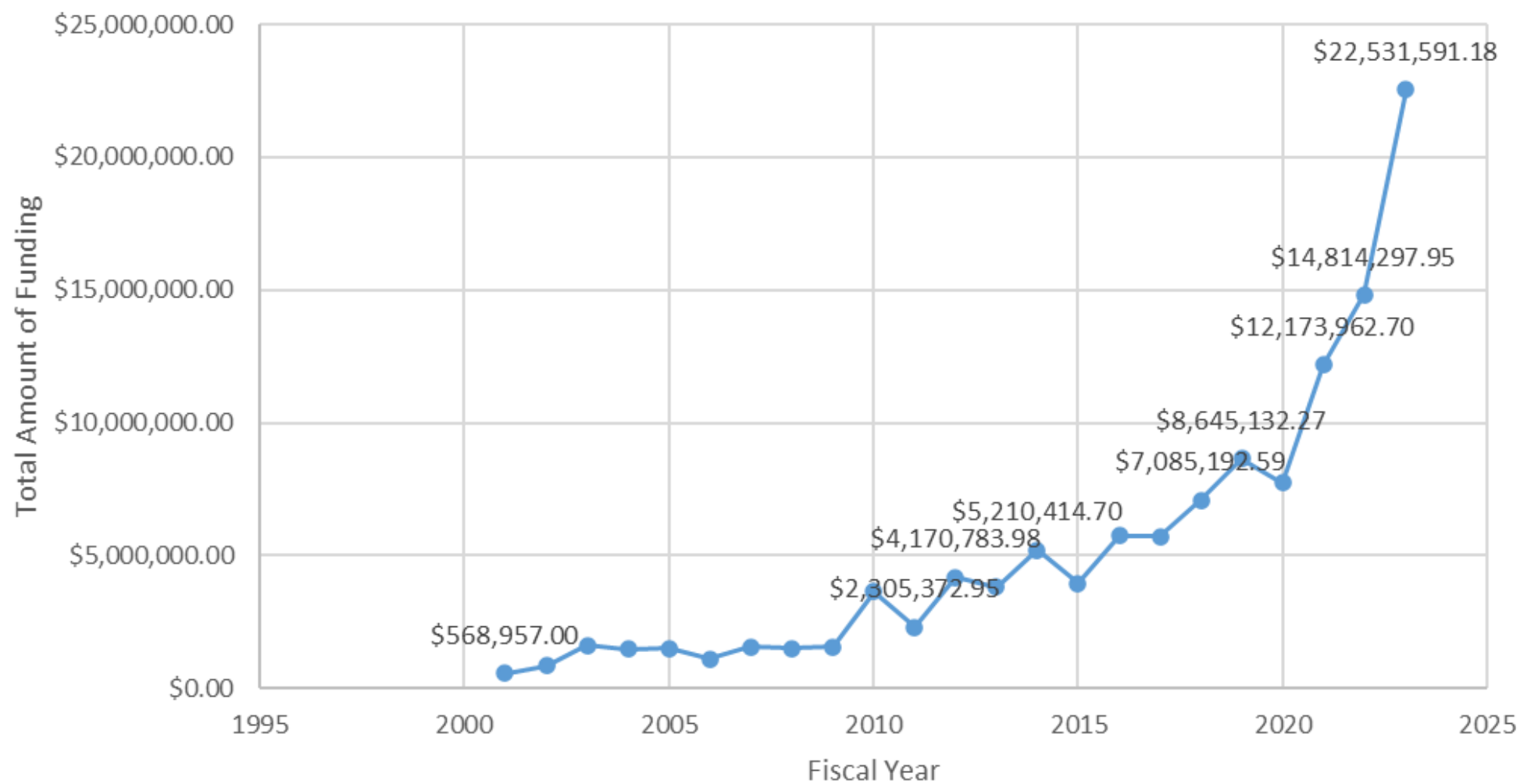
- Since creation in 2001, the network has:
 - Awarded 1,084 projects
 - Awards totaled over \$125 million
 - We have engaged 1,004 students in our projects over the last three fiscal years
 - We currently have 257 active and ongoing projects
- We added the following cooperators in March 2024:
 - Harrisburg University of Science and Technology
 - Biodiversity Research Institute
 - Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 - Leave No Trace
 - National Council on Public History
 - Native Plant Trust
- We now have 88 partners (federal and nonfederal) making us one of the largest CESU networks

Chesapeake Watershed CESU Student Award

- **Current Criteria – Enrollment status:** Actively enrolled graduate student; involved in CHWA CESU facilitated project
- **Expanded Criteria – Enrollment status:** Applicant was enrolled in graduate school within 2 years of the application deadline
- **Current Criteria - Nominations:** Made by advisor or federal partner
- **Expanded Criteria - Nominations:** Students can self nominate
- **Current timeline:** Nominations open February/March; Selection Committee reviews in late April; Presented at the June/July meeting
- **Different timeline?**
- **Any other ideas?**



Chesapeake Watershed CESU Total Funding FY 2001 - FY 2023



2024 CESU Network National Meeting | 16-17 July

CESU Council Meeting

- ✓ *New federal agency interest – DOI ORDA, DOI ITAP, DoS USAID*
- ✓ *CESU program funding – FY24 HUS funding status | FY25 – modest ↑*
- ✓ *CESU program business model assessment*

CESU DEIA Working Group

- ✓ *DOI WG on HBCU Engagement (EO 14041)*
- ✓ *DEIA Fellowship Proposal*

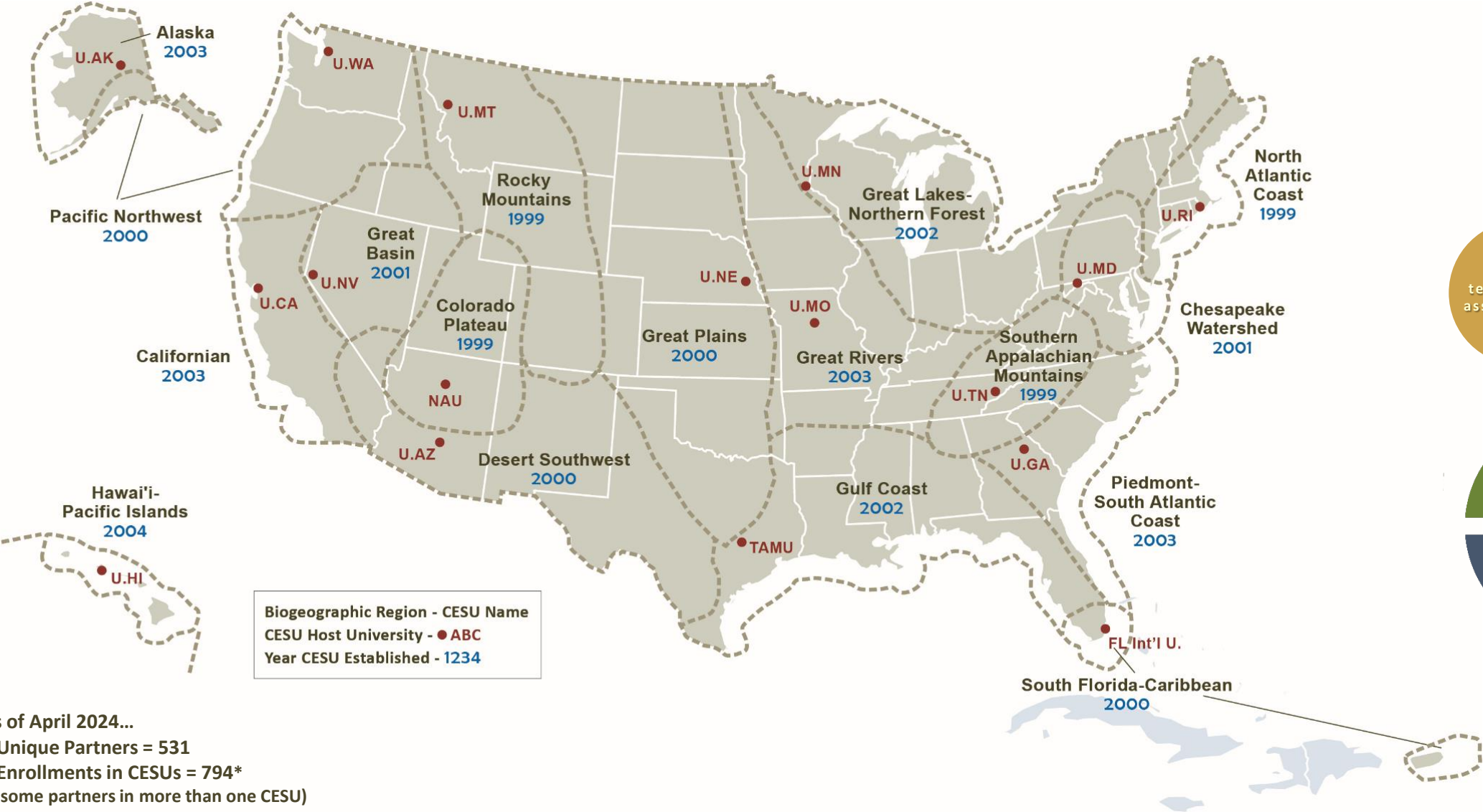
CESU 25-year anniversary recognition activities

- ✓ *Request for program/project highlights*
- ✓ *Public affairs, social media, outreach*

CESU Network strategic plan

Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Network

25 Years!



As of April 2024...

- Unique Partners = 531
- Enrollments in CESUs = 794*

(* some partners in more than one CESU)



Experts Database

Welcome to the CW CESU Experts Database. Use this database as a tool to connect with experts that are partners with the CESU research network. Enter relevant terms below to search our database of more than 150 highly qualified experts. Click on each expert's name to view their extended profile page.



CW CESU Experts Database

Refine Search Results By:

Research Discipline

Partner Institution

U.S. State



Shannon Kunday

Partner Institution:
Hood College

Research Disciplines:
Animal Behavior |
Psychology



Caroline Solomon

Partner Institution:
Gallaudet University

Research Disciplines:
Biogeochemistry |
Oceanography |
Water Quality



Pamela Mischen

Partner Institution:
Binghamton University

Research Disciplines:
Community Planning |
Political
Science/Policy/Public
Administration
| Social Science |
Urban Agriculture



Carly Muletz Wolz

Partner Institution:
Columbia University



Kristina Delaski

Partner Institution:
Columbia University



Ning Zhou

Partner Institution:
Binghamton University

Are you interested in working within the CW CESU Network?

If you're a researcher at one of our federal or non-federal partner institutions, click the following link to start the process to join our experts database.

[Apply to Join Our Experts Database](#)

Do you need assistance?

- Update campaign
- Encourage experts at your institution to join



NPS Fellowship Program Update

- Prioritize student engagement
- Two Activities
 - Student Fellowships – 2024 & 2025
 - Virtual Student Research Symposium –late 2025 or early 2026
- Priorities:
 - Engage underserved populations and tribal communities
 - Support work related to climate change

NPS Fellowships

- NPS-funded projects (CW CESU)
- Seven annual fellowships (\$3K each)
 - Year One – awarded 4
 - Year Two – will award 3
- Year Two nomination window will open in Fall 2024 with direct solicitation to PI's on active NPS CW CESU projects

2024 Fellowship Recipients



Christopher Blume

Virginia Tech

Dr. Mark Ford

Status of residual populations of threatened long-eared bats in ROCR.

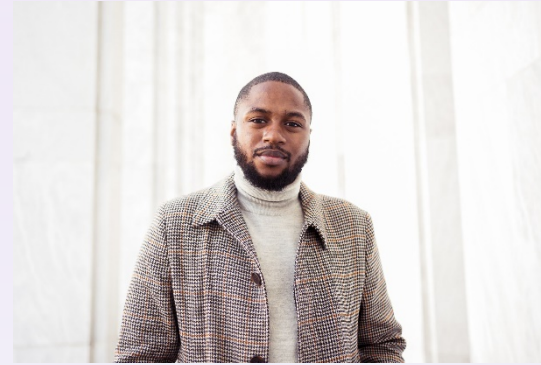


Erin Geibel

FSU/UMCES

Dr. Tom Serfass

Value of regional conservation areas to carnivores (CHOH).



Phillip Warfield

Howard

Dr. Ashley Preston

Cultural landscape report for Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site.



Liv Winnicki

SUNY Binghamton

Dr. Ruth Van Dyke

Documentation of Diné family settlement of Chacoan Landscapes.

Interactive Project Map Application



Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Interactive Projects Map



Rare Plant Study at Piscataway Park

[Learn More](#)



GWMP Memorial Avenue Corridor Cultural Landscape Report

[Learn More](#)



Ethnohistory Overview and Assessment of Arlington House (ARHO) Descendant Families

[Learn More](#)



Restoration of the Structure and Function of "Vallisneria Americana" beds on the tidal reaches of the Anacostia River and District of Columbia Portions of the Potomac River

[Learn More](#)



Assessing Status of Residual Populations of Threatened Northern Long-Eared Bats in Rock Creek Park

[Learn More](#)



Develop a Historic Resource Study of African American Life and History at the Peirce Estates, Rock Creek Park

[Learn More](#)

Project Discipline



Cultural



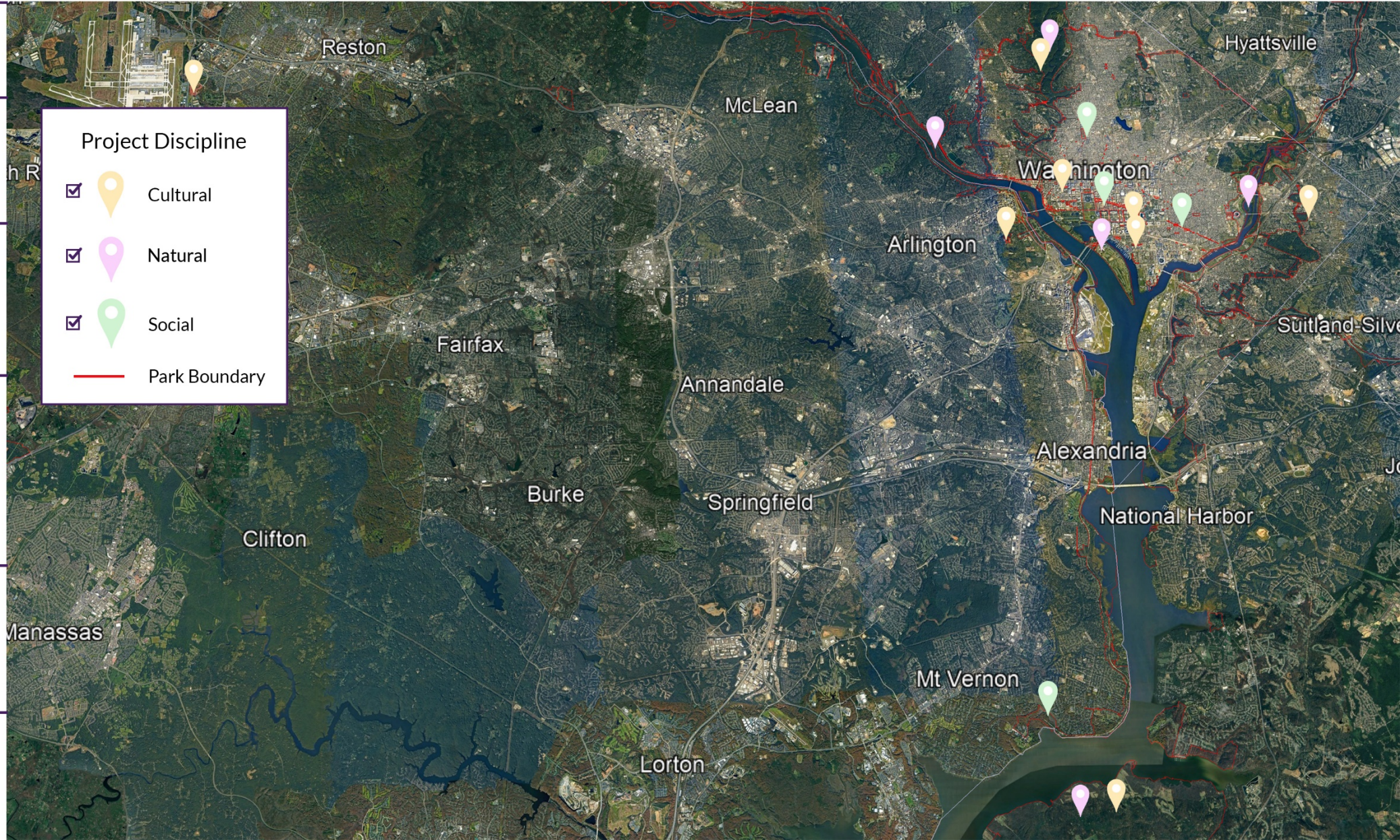
Natural



Social



Park Boundary





Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Interactive Projects Map



Rare Plant Study at Piscataway Park

[Learn More](#)



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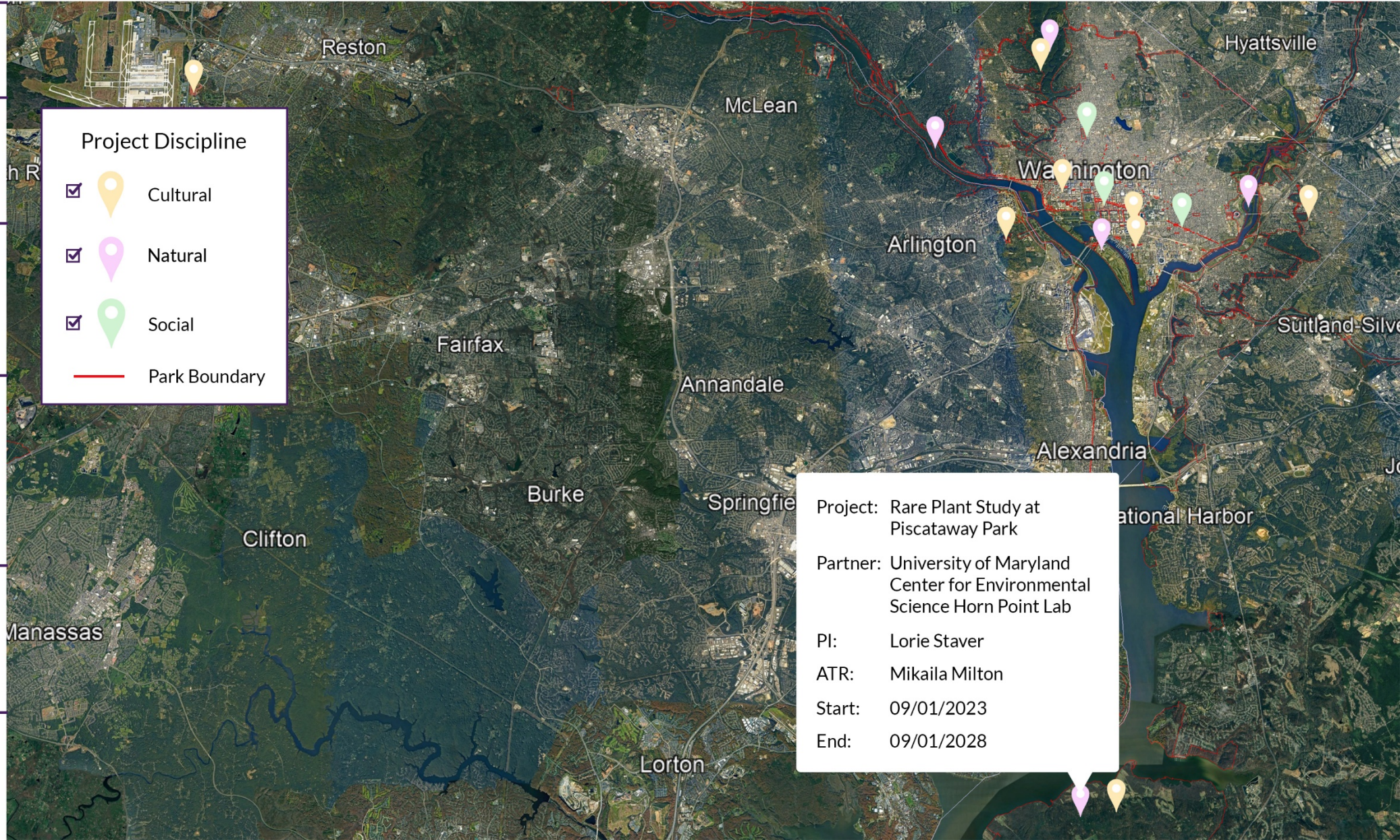
Natural



Social



Park Boundary



Project: Rare Plant Study at Piscataway Park

Partner: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Horn Point Lab

PI: Lorie Staver

ATR: Mikaila Milton

Start: 09/01/2023

End: 09/01/2028

DEIJA Statement

CESU DEIA Statement

The CESU Network is committed to advancing the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility.

CESU DEIA Principles

- *create and maintain a diverse and inclusive culture built on mutual respect and understanding*
- *foster a sense of belonging for all participants by adopting equitable policies and practices*
- *enhance and sustain diversity by taking concrete measurable actions to promote opportunities for and increase the participation of historically underrepresented and marginalized individuals, populations, and institutions*
- *embrace and value differences regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, culture, language, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, disability, age, career stage, lived experience, discipline, ways of knowing, religion or spirituality, political ideology, socioeconomic status, military or veteran status, and/or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations*

DEIJA Action Plan

- *Inform, Encourage, Assess, Engage*
 - Inform the network of opportunities and tell the stories of success
 - Share profiles of projects that have been successful through our webpage
- Encourage partners to consider diversity in their programs
 - Encourage the use of RSOs as much as possible and to give as much time as possible for responses; encourage federal partners to consider working with new partners (provide training to federal partners when needed)
 - Encourage the use of multi-institutional awards when possible to more diverse, undergraduate-focused institutions
 - Develop ways to encourage more participation in the Annual Meetings

DEIJA Action Plan (cont'd)

- Assess (quantitatively) about what we are doing
 - Assess annually the amount of CESU dollars going to HBCUs and small regional institutions
 - Capture the number opportunities for students that lead to internships and careers with federal/non-federal partners (quantitative and qualitative data)
- Engage our federal and nonfederal partners
 - Meet more frequently in person and showcase our work
 - Have the Annual Meeting and events in the Baltimore/Washington, DC area to attract more in-person attendance
 - Have periodic calls with OSP personnel at partner institutions to re-educate them on the CESU process, RSOIs, etc.
 - Expand participation and opportunities for networking during annual meetings (from underrepresented institutions)



Chesapeake Watershed CESU Student Award

- Launched Chesapeake Watershed CESU Student Award in 2023 thanks to funding from NPS NCR
- This year 2 awards of \$1,000 each (awards contingent upon funding)
- Criteria: Graduate student; involved in CW CESU facilitated project; for “exemplary efforts beyond a project’s standard outlined expectations”
- Timeline: Nominations open February/March; Selection in late April; Presented at the June/July meeting



Chesapeake Watershed CESU Student Award

The Chesapeake Watershed (CW) CESU Student Award recognizes students who make outstanding contributions to a CW CESU facilitated research project. The awards are given annually as funding allows. In 2024, we will offer up to 2 awards, with honorariums of \$1,000 each. Honorable mention awards without honorariums may also be awarded at the discretion of the selection committee and CW CESU Director.

Nominations must be emailed to Rhonda Schwinabart (rschwinabart@umces.edu) by Friday, March 29, 2024.

Eligibility: Any graduate student (Masters or Ph.D.) of a CW CESU higher education partner institution involved in a CW CESU funded project is eligible for the award. The student must have been enrolled at the institution at the time the CW CESU funded project took place and must be an actively enrolled student at the time of the nomination deadline.

Criteria: Students receiving the CW CESU Student Award are recognized for exemplary efforts beyond a project’s standard outlined expectations. Evidence of outstanding contributions could include, but are not limited to:

- A significant direct contribution to the management of a natural or cultural resource from a federal manager’s perspective. Please provide details of how the student’s efforts made a direct and significant impact on resource management and conservation efforts.
- A significant direct contribution to public engagement with a natural or cultural resource.
- A significant academic product such as a published journal article* or a technical report of exceptional note. Please provide details of the student’s participation in writing the article or report and of the product’s significance.

* academic publications will be weighted in the committee review of application materials.

Required nomination materials:

- Nomination form (PDF)
- Nomination letter from either the research institution or the federal agency detailing the exceptional contributions of the student and explaining why it is an outstanding contribution.
- Endorsement letter from the alternate project partner (e.g., if a federal agency nominates the student, the student’s home research institution must write an endorsement letter, or vice versa). Nominations without endorsement will not be reviewed.
- Student’s CV

Recommended additional nomination materials:

While not required, nominators are strongly encouraged to include supporting materials. Examples could include the following:

- ◊ Copies of publications— journal articles, technical reports
- ◊ Media— news articles, television or radio interview recordings
- ◊ Links to recordings of seminars or workshops led by student
- ◊ Photos
- ◊ Graphic, audio/visual, or computer-generated materials created by student as part of project.

Selection Process: A committee of CW CESU partners will review nominations and select recipients. The nomination period will be open for 45 days from mid-February each year to late -March. Selection will take place in April and students will receive awards at the annual CW CESU meeting in July.

Questions? Contact Rhonda Schwinabart at rschwinabart@umces.edu.





2024 CW CESU Student Award Winner



Jordan Coscia **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

“Jordan’s dissertation projects are diverse and ambitious, and she has built an impressive network of collaborators and data contributors, including researchers at the Smithsonian Zoo, the National Park Service, the Oak Spring Garden Foundation, the Clifton Institute, the Center for Urban Habitats, and the Virginia Natural Heritage Program. Collectively, her doctoral research will represent a landmark statement on the past, present, and potential future value of some of Virginia’s most unique and threatened plant communities.”

-Dr. J. Leighton Reid



2024 CW CESU Student Award Winner



Morgan Crump
The Pennsylvania State University

“Morgan has been crucial to the success of several recent National Park Service (NPS) and Penn State University CESU projects, evaluating human perceptions of anthropogenic light sources in a protected areas context. Morgan first facilitated this research at Penn State’s Arboretum as part of her thesis; however, the results were so significant for improving managerial approaches to reduce lighting impacts on both humans and ecological systems, that this led to other CESU agreements exploring this research in Acadia, Grand Teton, and now Great Smoky Mountain National Park.”

-Dr. Derrick Taff