

Using the Colorado Plateau CESU Cooperative Agreement #H1200-04-0002:

Procedures for Project Initiation, Continuation and Close-Out

(Revised 2/12/2007)

Introduction

All projects processed using a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Cooperative Agreement are technically considered “Modifications,” that is, they are modifications to the existing 5-year Cooperative Agreement administered by the CESU. The NPS Research Coordinator, located on campus at Northern Arizona University, administers all CPCESU modifications for the National Park Service. These modifications are also referred to, and perhaps better known as “Task Agreements.” For most purposes the terms are interchangeable, and each is given a number by the NPS Budget and Finance Office in Denver for tracking purposes. For example, modifications for work with Colorado State University are assigned consecutive numbers beginning with CSU-01. Each partner institution has its own numeric series.

Starting a New Project

To begin a new project the NPS Key Official (formerly park Technical Representative) develops a Scope of Work (SOW) and detailed budget in cooperation with the Principal Investigator. We wish to remain flexible in order to accommodate the needs of our many partners on the format for a Scope of Work. However, that said, a complete SOW should address the following: Background and Objectives, Term of Agreement, Statement of Work (to be performed), Statement of NPS Substantial Involvement, Schedule and Products (including a statement of when and where project field notes, photographs and negatives, and specimen or artifact collections (if any) will be returned to NPS) and Award and Payment.

At minimum, under the “Products” section include the requirement to complete the NPS Investigator’s Annual Report and a final report. It is advisable to include a due date for a draft of the final report. Also, include the following language in the “Products” section: “The Principal Investigator will prepare a brief report abstract suitable for public distribution and two hard copies and an electronic version (in PDF file format) of the final report and mail all to the NPS Research Coordinator, CPCESU, NAU, P.O. Box 5765, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5765.”

The NPS Key Official submits the following documents to the CPCESU for review and approval.

- Scope of Work
- Budget
- Project Abstract Form*
- Project Title Page*

The two required forms may be downloaded from our website at <http://cpcesu.nau.edu/Orgs/CPCESU/planning/>. These files may be downloaded and saved as documents, then completed.

For Natural Resource projects, the documents may be electronically mailed to the Research Coordinator at Ron_Hiebert@nps.gov. If you have questions, please call him at (928) 523-0877. For Cultural Resource, Social Science, and Interdisciplinary projects, the documents may be emailed to the Cultural Resources Coordinator at a_trinkle_jones@nps.gov. You may reach her by phone at (480) 727-8980.

The Principal Investigator submits the SOW and budget along with the completed Request for Federal Assistance (Standard Forms 424 and 424a) to their University Grants or Sponsored Programs Office for review and processing. Those forms are also available on our website. University administrators can assist Principal Investigators in completing the forms.

Ultimately, the Denver Budget Office must be in receipt of three key elements in order to fully execute the modification and obligate the funds. These elements are:

- A statement from the Research Coordinator or his representatives that the project is appropriate for processing through the Cooperative Agreement,
- The signed, completed paperwork (SOW with Title Pages, Budget, Project Abstract, SF424 and SF424a) from the Partner Institution, and
- A Purchase Request from the park submitted through IDEAS procurement desktop software.

For another look at the project initiation process, see the CPCEU Flow Chart on our website under “Project Planning.”

Continuing an Existing Project Request for No-Cost Extension

This is a request to simply extend the deadline for completion of the project. There is no change in the Scope of Work or Budget. The park Key Official submits an electronic message to the appropriate CPCEU contact (natural resources / social science—Nancy Skinner; cultural resources / interdisciplinary—Trinkle Jones) providing a brief justification for the extension. Approval is normally granted when justified.

The Principal Investigator submits a request in writing to their University Grants or Sponsored Projects Office, who in turn writes a formal request to the NPS and sends this to: Contracting Officer, National Park Service, Intermountain Regional Office, P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225-0287.

Adding Funds to an Existing Task Agreement or Modification

1. With no change in the Scope of Work (SOW) or Budget

For example, the project was originally conceived as a multi-year project with a detailed budget for each year, and the next year’s funding is now available.

The park Key Official submits a brief request for a modification/task agreement specifying the amount of the new funding, along with completed Project Abstract Form and Title Page to Nancy Skinner—Natural Resources/Social projects or Trinkle Jones – Cultural Resources/Interdisciplinary projects. The Key Official references the original task agreement or modification (e.g., Project No. NAU-33) as well as any other related, previous year’s agreements (e.g., Project Nos. NAU-33, NAU-45, NAU-72).

The Principal Investigator submits the brief request, plus the completed SF-424 and SF-424a to their University Grants or Sponsored Programs Office, who in turn mails it to the Contracting Officer, NPS Intermountain Regional Office in Denver.

In all cases, prior to awarding additional funds, the Key Official must be in receipt of products due for the previous year’s funding.

2. With a change in the Scope of Work and/or Budget

In this instance, all of the documents for starting a new project are required. The SOW with completed Project Title Pages, detailed budget, and completed Project Abstract Form should be electronically transmitted to the appropriate CPCEU contact (Natural Resources/Social—Nancy Skinner; Cultural Resources and Interdisciplinary—Trinkle Jones). The Key Official should reference the number of the original modification/task agreement (e.g., Project No. NAU-80) to which the work is related. See “Starting a New Project” above for more details.

Closing out a Project

The Principal Investigator submits copies of the final products, usually two hard copies and one electronic version (in PDF file format) of the final report, along with the report abstract, to the Research Coordinator and the specified number of copies to the park. Upon receipt of copies of the final report the park Key Official approves final payment (10%). The Key Official insures that requirements for the disposition and curation of collections, property, photographs, data, etc. as stipulated in the SOW are met. The Key Official notifies the Research Coordinator of possible confidentiality restrictions on the final products.

The Research Coordinator archives one hard copy of the final report at the host University (NAU), sends one copy to the NPS Technical Information Center (TIC) in Denver, and posts a report abstract and a link for the e-version (usually a PDF file) to the CPCESU website.