Memorandum

To: CESU Council and CESU Directors

From: CESU Network National Coordinator

Subject: CESU Project Reporting

Date: 01 February 2024

In alignment with provisions outlined in the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Network interagency Memorandum of Understanding, whereby the CESU Council shall establish policies and standard operating procedures guiding the activities of the network, this memo hereby establishes a uniform platform for CESU project reporting by federal and nonfederal partners. Project reporting in accordance with the approach outlined herein is expected as standard practice from this date forward.

Background
Thousands of projects have been conducted through the CESUs over the past 25 years. Project reporting is an important and included component of each CESU five-year multi-partner agreement (Article II. D. 5.). While some CESUs maintain their own local project databases and archives, no national system for cataloging project information was initiated at the program outset. A national database offers advantages for sharing and archiving information and monitoring program activities across a number of characteristics (e.g., CESU, sponsoring agency, partner organization, funding amount, geographic location, project type, discipline, subject matter area, project outputs, student involvement) to enhance program efficiency and accountability (e.g., consistency, transparency, periodic reporting, five-year renewals).

CESU Project Tracker
The CESU Network National Program Office established the online CESU Project Tracker as a national repository for projects conducted through the CESUs. The goal is to maintain a broadly accessible online national database reflecting participation by federal and nonfederal CESU partners since 1999. The objectives are to (1) foster a systematic and consistent approach for gathering and reporting CESU project information, (2) provide for periodic (e.g., quarterly, semi-annually) and rolling entry (e.g., at time of award) of project data, and (3) compile legacy project data from across the community of federal and nonfederal partners toward a comprehensive representation of program activities. The CESU Project Tracker application was developed as part of the National Park Service Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) system (https://irma.nps.gov/) in compliance with USG and DOI online system of records requirements. The National Program Office serves as administrator, with registered users designated by each agency and CESU assigned roles and permissions for entering and editing their respective data. Related guidance information (e.g., user registration, how-to info, FAQs) and additional details are available via the CESU Network website and CESU Project Tracker application help section.

Contact the CESU Network National Program Office with any related questions.