Internships in Natural Resources: 15 Years of Positive Benefits

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Acknowledgments

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- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
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- The Ute Tribe
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- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- USDA Forest Service
- US Department of Energy
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Glenn Springs Holdings
- US Bureau of Mines
- Central Plains and Mountain Section of The Wildlife Society
- Utah State University – Faculty and Administration
Utah State University - Uintah Basin Regional Campus

- New 133 acre campus
- First building completed
- Science building August 2010
- $30 million in private support
- Dean search in progress
Wildlife Science BS

- 30 Students enrolled
- 50/50 Trad – nontrad
- 50/50 Male – female
- Student Chapter TWS
- 2 On-site faculty
- BS Degree distance delivered
Internship Objectives

- Provide students with experience
- Assist natural resource agencies with management objectives
Benefits for Students

- Gain experience with agencies
- Exposure and experience with research
- Application of classroom experiences in real-world situations
- Develop contacts with managers
- Make a living – all internships funded
- Potential for career hire
Benefits for Agencies

- Ability to leverage limited funds
- Hiring and supervision responsibility of USU
- Recruiting of students for career positions
- Ability to use research specialists on projects
Benefits for Utah State University

- Research opportunities for faculty
- Ability to leverage limited funding
- Design courses that include field work
- Provide students with state-of-the-art technology
Funding 1995 - 2010

- Over $2 million
- About 25% of my salary
- All student salaries
- Trucks, computers, GPS, radio-telemetry gear
- Indirect costs ~ 20%
Internships Funded By The Bureau of Land Management – Vernal Field Office
Internship Details

- BLM
  - Challenge Cost-share
  - Colorado Plateau Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

- USU – UB
  - Faculty Salaries for Internships
  - Equipment
  - Indirect Cost Waivers
Greasewood Control in Book Cliffs

- Four student interns
- Cooperation between USU, UDWR, BLM, Uintah County
- Wide area applications
Browns Park Deer Studies

- Annual deer counts
- Deer movements study from 1980s
GPS/GIS Training

- Trimble GPS
- ArcGIS
- Project-oriented training
- Pariette Wetlands
- Red Mountain
Pariette Wetlands Internship

- Started in 1997
- Fifteen student interns
- Wetlands management
Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction

- Started in 1999
- Faculty support
- 40 student interns
- Project coordination
- Project evaluation
- Prairie dog work
Disease Monitoring

- 30 student interns
- Volunteer and paid
- Small mammal trapping
- Disease screening
Range Improvement Monitoring

- GPS of improvements
- Digital and film images of improvements
- Evaluation of condition
The Future

- Distance Delivered Wildlife Science Degree
- US Forest Service – Youth Conservation Corps Internships
- Pariette Wetlands Field Station
Outcomes?

- Agencies are more productive
- USU and faculty have been successful
- 100% of students have career positions!
Keys To Success

- Personal Relationships
- Communications
- Long-term goals
- Student Recruiting
Questions?