Greetings from Logan where the beginning of fall brought a whirlwind of activity. Students enthusiastically returned to campus in late August. Enrollment of majors in degree programs was up over previous years with our Recreation Resources and Forest Ecology & Management degrees showing the largest increase in student numbers. Highlights of our opening social included toe-tapping Americana music from Mama Longlegs, our new house band.

Celebrations this fall semester included the dedication of the Mason Wildlife Exhibit and the establishment of the Colorado River Studies Center. October brought a visit to USU by the leadership of natural resource agencies. We also look forward to a campus visit by environmental historian Charles C. Mann, author of The Wizard and the Prophet. Mann will visit Utah State University on April 4 to help the QCNR celebrate NR Week.

We also welcome four new faculty to the Quinney College this fall. Profiles of these youthful folks are on pages 4-5 of this newsletter. These new scholars have hit campus running with new courses, new projects, and fresh perspectives on the science and management of natural resources.

Chris Luecke, Dean
QCNR News and Events

Future of the Colorado River

A prominent collection of scientists, donors, community members and non-profits came together on Saturday, October 13th in Moab Utah for a symposium on the future of the Colorado River, sponsored by the Center for Colorado River Studies at Utah State University. USU Professor Jack Schmidt, the inaugural Janet Quinney Lawson Endowed Chair in Colorado River Studies, was the event organizer. Panelists included David Rubin, Brad Udall, Anne Castle, Chris Harris, Eric Kuhn, Clayton Palmer, John Weisheit, Sasha Reed and Phaedra Budy. The goal of the event was to showcase the research and questions that frame the future management of the river—its water, riparian habitat and recreation value for millions of Americans. A packed crowd came out in force to Moab’s historic Star Hall to hear the panelists and learn about creative ideas for management of the Colorado. Lively conversation was spurred on after a dynamic question and answer session. QCNR Dean Chris Luecke thanked the major donors who have funded the endowed chair, project costs, and graduate student scholarships, including the Janet Quinney Lawson Foundation, My Good Fund, The Walton Family Foundation, The Catena Foundation and David Bonderman. The Quinney College of Natural Resources is proud to be at the forefront of Colorado River Science through the work of the Center.

Dedication of Mason Wildlife Collection

On September 21, the longstanding vision of Jerry Mason and his family was realized with the dedication of the Mason Wildlife Collection in the Quinney Library. Jerry worked closely with faculty member Terry Mesmer and others to promote the role of hunting in wildlife conservation. He had a true love of the hunt and shared this love with his family, youth and the community. During his lifetime, Jerry was fortunate to build a taxidermy collection of North American wildlife. After his death, Jerry’s wife Miriam and his family worked closely with Utah State University to transfer Jerry’s collection so it could be used for education and be accessible to the public. Our thanks go out to Jerry and his family for their dedication to this vision and to their long-standing partnership with Utah State University.
Summer Internship Highlights

The QCNR collaborative summer internship program is a vital part of our undergraduate student development. This program provides hand-on professional experience for students working in state and federal agencies, NGOs, and private organization. This summer was another success with students reporting positive experiences that will help them move forward in their desired career paths. Our mission is to expand this program to provide a greater number of internship positions in a wider range of areas. Keslee Green and Ethan Hammer are two 2018 examples of the success of this program.

Keslee Green
Recreation Wilderness Trails Crew
US Forest Service (Sponsored by the Stephen Jones Memorial Fund)

Keslee reported gaining valuable skills during her three months with the USFS this summer. She learned wilderness survival skills, horse packing, construction, and problem solving. She had networking opportunities with USFS professionals and was able to explore potential career paths within the agency. Keslee also reported having an enjoyable summer and making great friends.

Ethan Hammer
Wildlife Research
Cedar Breaks National Monument (Sponsored by the Joseph Miller Fund)

Ethan spent his summer working as a wildlife technician at Cedar Breaks National Monument. He worked alongside faculty member Nicki Frey conducting a wildlife inventory project. Ethan helped to set up, monitor and analyze data from 27 remote trail cameras. The data collected will be used to publish interpretive materials about wildlife for visitor use. Ethan is also working with Frey to publish a research paper detailing the methods used to attract wildlife to remote camera sites.

SOSNR Climate Change Town Hall Meeting

In collaboration with Utah Climate Week, the Student Organization for Society and Natural Resources (SOSNR) hosted a Climate Change Town Hall on October 1. The event was moderated by USU Professor Rob Davies, who is well-known for his climate change work with The Crossroads Project. Students, community members, and faculty shared personal stories about climate change, including work they are doing to mitigate the effects of climate change. A solar panel project for the Caine College of the Arts Building and a climate change resolution adopted by the Utah State Legislature were highlights. The event was a great success with over 100 attendees.
New Faculty

Sarah Klain

Sarah Klain joined QCNR in August as the Andrew Senti Assistant Professor of Ecosystem Services in the Department of Environment and Society. Sarah is originally from Maine, where she also did part of her dissertation research on offshore wind farms. She attended Reed College, where she studied biology and environmental economics. After working as a GIS Analyst at the non-profit conservation organization Ecotrust in Oregon, she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Palau, then earned her MS and PhD from the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia. She recently completed a post-doctoral position in the Geography Department at Oregon State University. Sarah currently teaches a course on Environmental Policy in which students form teams to develop and implement diverse sustainability-related policy changes in the Cache Valley. Sarah’s current research interests include exploring options for ecologically regenerative renewable energy landscapes (e.g., solar and wind farms that can benefit particular plants and animals). As a seasoned trail runner, avid climber and beginner mountain biker, she’s enjoying living close to Logan Canyon.

Tal Avgar

Tal joined the QCNR faculty as an Assistant Professor of Movement Ecology in the Department of Wildland Resources in August. He is interested in how and why animals move through landscapes, and in the ecological and evolutionary causes and consequences of animal behavior. Tal comes to Logan from Canada where he completed his PhD in Integrative Biology at the University of Guelph in 2012.

Before immigrating to Canada, Tal lived in Jerusalem, Israel, where he received his BS in Geology and Biology, and MS in Environmental Sciences from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This spring Tal will be teaching a graduate course focusing on wildlife ecology and would love to hear of topics students are keen to learn about within this broad subject area. Tal is accompanied through life by his multi-talented wife, their two averagely talented young boys, and a severely untalented cat named Quark.
Clark Rushing

Clark joined the QCNR faculty as an Assistant Professor of Population Ecology in the Department of Wildland Resources in August. His research focuses on quantifying demographic processes and their influences on individuals, populations, and species, with a particular focus on the ecology of long-distance migratory birds. Clark is originally from Atlanta, GA and completed his undergraduate degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Princeton University. He received his PhD from the University of Maryland where he worked jointly with scientists at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center.

Prior to moving to Logan, Clark was a post-doctoral fellow at both the Smithsonian and the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. At USU, Clark will teach graduate and undergraduate courses focused on population ecology and ecological modeling, and continue conducting research on migratory birds. When not teaching or doing research, Clark can usually be found with his wife and two sons enjoying the great outdoors.

Kezia Manlove

Kezia joined QCNR in August as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Wildland Resources. Her research focuses on pathogen transmission and persistence in animal populations, and she is especially interested in diseases that move between wildlife and livestock. Though she was originally trained as a statistician (she earned her MS in Statistics from Montana State University), Kezia moved to disease ecology in 2010 in search of a field with a more applied focus.

She earned her PhD from Penn State’s Center for Infectious Disease Dynamics in 2016. Her applied work centers on understanding and managing infectious pneumonia in bighorn sheep, and she uses that system as motivation to ask more general questions about disease, movement, and population ecology. Kezia and her husband are trying to age out of a fifteen-year stint as devout adrenaline junkies; they thought moving to Logan would facilitate this transition, but thus far, it has not. So, look for them on the trails and hills near Logan.
The Wildlife Society

The Wildlife Society (TWS) student chapter volunteered with HawkWatch International for their annual migration monitoring project. It took place on the Goshute Mountains in Nevada. A group of five TWS students helped with bird counts and trapping blinds. This annual event is one of the favorite club experiences of the year. Wildlife Ecology and Management student Daniel Kimball capture some beautiful photos of the event.

The USU TWS chapter attended their 25th Annual Wildlife Society Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. A group of seven undergraduate students represented the Quinney College of Natural Resources.

Four students—Rylee Jensen, Erin Ethington, Kenen Goodwin, and Jaren Hutchinson—presented posters detailing ongoing undergraduate research projects. Another student, Erin Butikofer, gave an oral presentation about her project with Dr. Michael Conover. Erin was the only undergraduate speaker among the nine other presenters in that symposium. The QCNR students competed against other student chapters in Quiz Bowl. Their knowledge about mammalogy, botany, environmental policies, TWS history, and animal morphology was put to the test. Although they did not get the top spot, the competition was a great way for students to showcase their knowledge and have fun while doing it!

Our students benefitted considerably from symposia focused on the behavior and movement patterns of various wildlife species, new ways to model statistical data, and improved scientific writing. Other networking events included opportunities to connect with experts across the country and further their careers in wildlife ecology and management.
Forestry Club

The USU Student Chapter of the Society of American Foresters attended their recent annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. Students attended a diversity of talks and symposia focused on forest ecology and management. Highlights were sessions on fire and on water quality. QCNR students met with agency recruiters and several students lined up job interviews with the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

The QCNR quiz bowl team did well in the early stages of the competition but were eliminated by the team from Colorado State. The club pledged to do better next year.

Student travel expenses to Portland and Cleveland were paid in part by donations from Merilyn Reeves. These generous donations allow our students to showcase their work to a national audience and to participate in the variety of professional development activities. Thanks to Merilyn and other donors for their support.

Natural Resources Coordination Council Tours Logan

On September 18-19 QCNR hosted a visit to the USU campus by members of the Natural Resources Coordinating Council. This group consists of the leadership of state and federal natural resource agencies, staffers from US and Utah congressional delegations, and members of the Governor’s Office. Highlights of the visit included a tour of Logan Canyon with discussions of the use of beaver in managing water resources, the value of aspen in managing fire, the combined use of National Forest for recreation and timber harvest, and plans for expansion of State Parks at Bear Lake. Dinner for 50-plus dignitaries was held at the Alumni House on campus. A tour of the USU Water Lab and talks by QCNR faculty on fire forecasting, prevention, and restoration were held on campus.
QCNR EVENTS

Nov 26: QCNR Award Nominations Open
Nov 28: Christmas Tree Sale
Dec 7: QCNR Holiday Party, 4PM - NR Atrium
Dec 3 - Jan 11: Scholarship Applications Due
March 23: QCNR Awards Banquet
April 1-6: NR Week - featuring Charles Mann

For details on these and other upcoming events please visit:

www.qcnr.usu.edu