



OBFS President's Note

BY RHONDA STRUMINGER, PRESIDENT

Dear OBFS Community,

Thinking about my message for this newsletter, I keep coming back to the topic of field station sustainability. How well are stations set up to not just survive today's challenges – but to thrive? How well are we modeling sustainable behaviors and infrastructure?

Looking to the United Nations' [17 Goals for Sustainable Development](#) and working with my station's staff to commit to achieving relevant goals featured in [the Climate Toolkit](#) (an OBFS partner), I discovered more questions but also some concrete steps for my field station.

How will we reduce our municipal water consumption by 25%? With water capture tanks. How can we get to 100% clean renewable energy – generated onsite or procured through market mechanisms? We can limit our electrical use to what our solar panels can generate (or find funding to grow our panels). Where are we spending more money than we need to be? (Electricity!) Can we make sure that over 10% of all food purchases are within a 160-km radius? (Yes!) What are our investment priorities that make sense for our bottom line? How are we advocating better stewardship of our planet that informs not just our visitors, but our research?

Answering these questions can help each station position itself as a model within its local and scientific communities. These actions can also help us find funders who share our priorities. Biological field stations are not just some of the most valuable tools we have for studying the natural world, we are part of the natural world.

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Banner: Attendees at the 2015 Annual OBFS meeting at Rocky Mountain Biological Lab, Colorado.

2025 OBFS ANNUAL MEETING AND TRAVEL SUPPORT AWARDS

The annual OBFS roadshow continues into the Rocky Mountain West! The [2025 OBFS Annual Meeting](#) will take place Monday 15-September through Friday 19-September at the [Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory](#) (RMBL; pronounced rumble).

Located north of Crested Butte, Colorado, RMBL calls the remainder of a 19th century mining town home and facilitates long-term research, snow science, and field education. Workshops will take place Monday and Friday, field trips on Tuesday, and the primary bulk of the meeting is Tuesday afternoon through Thursday night. **Register and find details here:** <https://www.rmbl.org/obfs2025/>.

Theme: Resilience and Adaptation, Fear and Triumph: A RAFT to Field Station Success in a Turbulent World

Meeting Support Travel Award

Deadline: August 15th, 2025

OBFS is pleased to support four Meeting Support Awards to attend the 2025 OBFS Annual Meeting in Colorado this September. This year, the International and Early Career/Student applications are combined.

Submission Requirements

- Letter of interest from field station director
- Justification of need (please also designate which award you are applying for)
- Link to station's webpage or information
- Membership in good standing of OBFS.

Rules and Regulations

- Maximum of \$2,250 USD per application
- Four awards will be given (two awards to international stations or stations with limited resources; two awards to student/early career applicants *)
- Student/early career awardees must be enrolled as a current student or be within 7 years since receiving a graduate degree
- Only one award per applying institution
- Priority will be given to new applicants, but previous recipients of travel awards will be considered
- Priority will be given to international stations, but stations with limited resources will be considered
- Awards are on a reimbursement basis only (i.e., no funds will be provided ahead of expenses)

- Allowable expenses include Economy airfare to the meeting location, normal travel expenses (visas, meals, enroute lodging, car rental, etc.) and registration and workshop fees
- Original receipts will be required for reimbursement of allowed expenses
- Legible scanned copies of receipts can be emailed to the OBFS treasurer for reimbursement
- Membership fees are not reimbursable or allowed as part of the meeting awards.

Please send applications with subject line [OBFS 2025 Travel Award] to:

David Maneli, Associate Director, Gault Nature Reserve, McGill University, david.maneli@mcgill.ca.

Timing of Submission, Review and Award

August 15th - Applications Due

August 15th-22nd - Selection Committee Review

August 25th - All applicants will be contacted to inform them on the status of their applications. Winners will be sent all information concerning the award and procedures for reimbursement.

** If the minimum of 2 international field stations or 2 student/early career applications is not fulfilled, the selection committee reserves the right to adjust the distribution of awards.*

THE VIRTUAL FIELD: EXPANDING ACCESS TO FIELD SCIENCE EDUCATION — BY ITCHUNG CHEUNG

Now in its fifth year, *The Virtual Field (TVF)* – launched by OBFS during the COVID-19 pandemic – continues to bridge field stations and marine labs (FSMLs) and educators through immersive virtual learning.

The 2025 Virtual Field Annual Meeting was recently hosted at Juniata College's Raystown Field Station in Pennsylvania, bringing together contributors from across the country and supported by an NSF Research Coordination Network (RCN) award.

To date, TVF has produced over 400 videos—ranging from eco-system explorations to 360-degree seasonal walkthroughs—garnering more than 13,000 views on YouTube.

These resources, created by partners across OBFS, National Association of Marine Labs (NAML), and other Field Stations and Marine Lab (FSML) networks, are transforming how students connect with science and place-based learning. Visit www.thevirtualfield.org to explore ecosystems around the globe and catch our *Live from the Field* broadcasts.



Get involved and join the 2025–2026 Cohort! TVF is currently recruiting new participants for its third RCN year!

We welcome applications from FSMLs interested in showcasing their sites and engaging with educators and from Faculty at 2- and 4-year institutions seeking to enrich their teaching through virtual field-based experiences. This is a unique opportunity to collaborate on innovative curriculum, connect students to STEM pathways, and make your field site part of a growing global learning platform.

To learn more or express interest, please visit thevirtualfield.org or reach out directly.

Contact: Itchung Cheung, OBFS Collaborations Committee Chair, Itchung.Cheung@oregonstate.edu

Join The Virtual Field 2025-26 cohort!

ARCHBOLD BIOLOGICAL STATION SCIENTISTS HONORED WITH ESA AWARD — BY TAHLIA WARRICK

2025 ESA Award Recipients

This spring, scientists from OBFS Member [Archbold Biological Station](#) in Florida were recognized with the Ecological Society of America's (ESA) Sustainability Science Award. The award recognizes the authors of the scholarly work that makes the greatest contribution to the emerging science of ecosystem and regional sustainability through the integration of ecological and social sciences.

Archbold staff Joshua H. Daskin, Angeline N. Meeks, Vivienne L. Sclater, Julie M. Sorfleet, Joseph M. Guthrie and Hilary M. Swain, along with collaborators Jon Oetting and Thomas S. Hootor received the award for authorship of "[Marshaling science to advance large landscape conservation](#)," published in *Conservation Science and Practice* on Aug. 27, 2024. The study represents a groundbreaking contribution to sustainability science.

This research team has demonstrated the transformative power of actionable science in preserving the 18-million-acre Florida Wildlife Corridor, one of the world's most ambitious habitat connectivity projects. By combining rigorous research with innovative tools like the Florida Circuit Model and by fostering partnerships with landowners, government agencies, corporations and non-governmental organizations, their work has contributed to the permanent protection of over 191,000

acres and the allocation of \$2.3 billion in state funding. Their efforts serve as a model for co-produced science that inspires impactful conservation outcomes.

This model has been instrumental for organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation for their planning of conservation areas and promoting innovative development practices.

Moreover, the team's dedication to effective science communication and collaboration has ensured the practical application of their findings. Their cross-organizational cartographic standards, educational outreach and workshops have united stakeholders under a shared vision of sustainability.

Archbold is a world-class natural laboratory located on over 20,000 acres in the Headwaters of the Everglades. Archbold's mission is to build and share the scientific knowledge needed to protect the life, lands, and waters of Florida and beyond. With seven in-house ecological research programs, Archbold science is deeply trusted and critical for conservation of species and systems in Florida.

Archbold is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1941, dedicated to science, conservation, and education.

Contact: Tahlia Warrick, Director of Advancement, twarrick@archbold-station.org

Below: ESA Award Winners from Archbold Biological Station, Florida. Photo credit: ESA.



ANNUAL MEETING CONCURRENT SESSION: LESSONS LEARNED FROM OBFS “HAS BEENS.” — BY PHILIPPE COHEN

These are difficult times and it takes careful, resilient, and thoughtful strategies to successfully navigate obstacles to assure the viability of Field Stations and Marine Labs (FSMLs).

A panel, officially titled “Sage Advice from Retired FSMLS Directors/Managers,” at the 2025 Annual Meeting will be composed of former FSML managers and directors who have seen, experienced and mostly successfully navigated challenges over the past 40 years.

Each will give a brief summary of the most important lessons learned to adapt to changing circumstances and new challenges.

Most of the session will involve questions and conversations about how to navigate these tumultuous times.

If you are wondering how to effectively navigate current circumstances, if you are looking for new ideas and approaches, this just might be the session for you.



Above: A vocalizing coyote (Canis latrans). Photo credit: Philippe Cohen.

VOLUNTEER TOURISM AT FIELD STATIONS — BY TED KARFAKIS

Biological field stations worldwide have been assisted in their efforts by committed volunteers who contribute toward positive environmental and social impacts.

Recently the Kalamos Island Biological Field Station in Greece hosted the film crew of the German Television Channel ZDF that is producing a documentary called Plan B. This documentary focuses on alternative forms of travel through volunteering. It was an interesting time and our team felt honored to be interviewed and filmed by the crew. The documentary is coming soon, so stay tuned.

Learn more about [Kalamos Island Biological Field Station's Volunteer Program](#) here.



Above: Kalamos Island Field Station personnel.

Contact: Ted Karfakis is Director of Kalamos Island Biological Field Station, tedkarfakis@terrasyvestris.org.

"FIELD TO LAB" PROGRAM ADVANCES SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AT UC MERCED — BY JOY BACCEI



Above: Participants in Field to Lab at UC Merced.

The University of California Merced Natural Reserve System is celebrating the milestone of Year 2 of an exciting new program called Field to Lab, an extension of the innovative *¿field curious?*[™] initiative.

Field to Lab is designed to inspire the next generation of climate and conservation leaders by giving students hands-on experience in both the field and the lab, and by providing them with a signature golden backpack with field gear in it that will aid them in field research.

Located in the heart of California's Great Central Valley, this UC Merced collaborative effort brings together the UC Merced Natural

Reserve System, Stable Isotope Ecosystem Lab, CalTeach, and Valley Institute for Sustainability, Technology, and Agriculture (VISTA), which includes the F3 Innovate program and the university's Experimental Smart Farm.

The program, officially titled "Sustainable Ag. from Field to Lab", offers a 3-day immersive workshop tailored to — but not limited to — *¿field curious?*[™] alumni. It focuses on soil and agricultural science and using research to inform sustainable land stewardship. Students spend one day outdoors at the Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve and Experimental Smart Farm, one in the CalTeach Lab conducting physical analysis, and another in the Stable Isotope Lab performing chemical analysis—connecting fieldwork with cutting-edge science.

Some of the topics that undergraduates research includes soil carbon storage, soil nutrient variation across landscapes, and agricultural connections to climate. In the summer months, a middle school version called the Bobcat Summer STEM Academy Field to Lab is offered, where local junior high age area youth explore field journaling, soil sampling, and lab analysis—building a foundation in environmental science from a young age. The latest cohort was recently highlighted in an ABC 30 News video that can be viewed [here](#).

Field to Lab is more than a research program—it's about breaking barriers in science, creating community, enhancing sense of belonging, building science identity and expanding access to environmental careers. Thanks to the generous support of the Henry Robert Newhall Foundation, UC Merced is growing a diverse, skilled, and inspired sustainability workforce—starting from the ground up.

Contact: Joy Baccei, Director, Merced Vernal Pools & Grassland Reserve, jbaccei@ucmerced.edu

SONOMA STATE CELEBRATES OUTGOING AND NEW DIRECTORS

At OBFS Member Station, [Sonoma State University's Center for Environmental Inquiry](#) (SSU CEI), a new chapter is beginning as outgoing director Claudia Luke announces her retirement and welcomes Kerry Wining as the incoming director.

Under Luke's 16 years of leadership, the Center has emerged as a catalyst for academic- community partnerships that address today's most pressing environmental challenges. "My career at SSU has been focused on helping students understand themselves as partners with the living world – partners who find solutions when that relationship goes awry," Luke said.

During her time at CEI, Luke helped earn more than \$5 million in grants and donations, and developed a strategic vision aligned with SSU's identity as a liberal arts and sciences institution, engaging students and faculty from all disciplines in addressing environmental challenges. Today, these programs reach more than 6,500 university students each year and include opportunities for student engagement throughout their academic careers.

Luke says she is excited to welcome Kerry Wining, who has been serving as CEI's Outreach & Program Development Lead, to the director role.

Wining plans to carry forward the momentum and vision started under Luke's tenure. "We have a strong transition plan in place to ensure that the mission not only continues but grows," Wining said. "The foundation we've built under Claudia's leadership is opening the door to a new chapter impact and innovation, and I can't wait to get started." Read [more about CEI here](#).



Above: CEI directors Claudia Luke and Kerry Wining.

OBFS PRESIDENT'S NOTE

(continued from page 1)

As we strive to mentor and support the next generation of field biologists and researchers, while keeping the lights on, we need to get creative. Partnerships with local donors, nonprofits, governments, and businesses can boost our visibility and our longevity. Ecotourism, workshops, educational programs and even new tech (e.g., remote sensors and online data platforms) can help expand research capabilities, generate revenue, and, ideally, minimize costs.

The long-term success of field stations depends on our ability to stay flexible and communicate our value. As environmental issues become more urgent, the work done at field stations and marine laboratories will only become more important. If we can stay visible, build strong networks, and adapt to changing conditions, we will continue to thrive—even in uncertain times.

Best wishes,
Rhonda Struminger, Ed.M. Ph.D.
President@obfs.org

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE NEWS

Is there a subject you wish you could discuss with other field stations but haven't made the time?

Is there a speaker you have wanted to hear from but haven't had the opportunity?

Do you want other field stations to learn more about what is happening in your corner of the world?

Are you looking for help with a particular challenge?

Let the International Committee know and together we can organize a one-hour Virtual Café on the topic of your choice!

Send an email to david.maneli@mcgill.ca with your ideas or suggestions.



Events Calendar

Stay in the know: scroll to the bottom of the OBFS Events webpage <https://obfs.org/events/> and click "Subscribe to Calendar." It's easy!

BERMUDA INSTITUTE OF OCEAN SCIENCES DIRECTOR — BY ROSEMARIE MCMAHON

OBFS Member Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS) is pleased to announce that Craig Carlson has been appointed our next president and director. BIOS is a unit of the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory at Arizona State University.

Carlson succeeds former president and CEO, Bill Curry. His association with BIOS began in the 1980s as a visiting researcher, and he became a faculty member of the institute in the 1990s. He has played a central role in major marine science programs in the Atlantic, including the Bermuda Atlantic Time-series Study and the Microbial Observatory programs. These projects have produced decades of critical data that help scientists understand long-term changes in ocean biogeochemistry and microbial processes.

Since 2001, Carlson has been a professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research connects marine microbiology with organic biogeochemistry, advancing our understanding of how microbial communities interact with dissolved organic matter in ocean systems.

Carlson holds a B.A. in Biology from Colby College and a PhD in Marine Microbial Ecology from the University of Maryland. He also completed postdoctoral

research in organic biogeochemistry at BIOS.

Throughout his career, he has held key leadership roles, including chair of his academic department, chair of the U.S. Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry Scientific Steering Committee, and science director of BIOS-SCOPE, an international collaborative initiative now in its tenth year. BIOS-SCOPE brings together scientists from Bermuda, Europe, the UK, and the US to study ocean biogeochemical cycles, with a focus on the role of marine microbes in



Above: Craig Carlson of BIOS.

regulating the global carbon cycle and supporting life on Earth. Carlson has served on the US GO-SHIP executive committee and his honors include election as an AAAS Fellow and recognition as an ASLO Sustaining Fellow. With strong Bermuda ties and a proven leadership record in collaborative marine science, Carlson is well-prepared to guide ASU BIOS into a new era of innovation and impact. Please join us in welcoming Carlson to his new role.

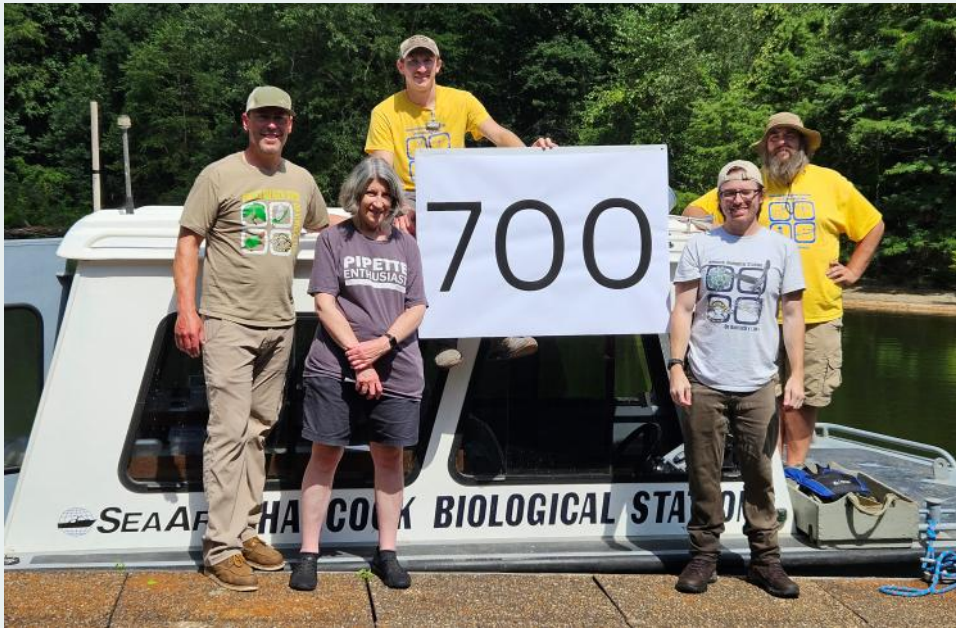
Contact: Rosemarie McMahon, Director of Advancement at BIOS, rosemarie.mcmahon@bios.asu.edu.

700TH RESEARCH CRUISE ON KENTUCKY LAKE — BY MICHAEL FLINN

OBFS Member Hancock Biological Station (HBS) recently celebrated a major milestone – the 700th research cruise conducted as part of the Kentucky Lake Long-term Monitoring Program (KLMP). Since its launch in 1988, this program has involved students, staff, faculty, and volunteers in collecting vital data on water quality and biological communities in Kentucky Lake.

Their continued efforts have supported numerous research projects and publications, making the KLMP one of the longest-running reservoir monitoring programs in the world. The celebration welcomed HBS alumni, former boat captains, and friends of the station. Highlights of the event included a presentation of key find-

ings, trends in ecological patterns, and discussions on invasive species and emerging threats to the Tennessee River system. To learn more, visit www.murraystate.edu/hbs.



Left: The 700th Cruise Crew: student Cord Lemons, Operations Manager Jason Harris, Field Technician Clay Thompson, Dean of Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology Claire Fuller and Director Michael Flinn.

Contact: mflinn@murraystate.edu

OBFS 2025 STATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Collaborations Committee welcomes applications for the **OBFS Station Exchange Program (SXP)**. The intent of the program is to provide mini-travel awards to facilitate field station staff travel to other stations in the OBFS network for shadowing, cross-training and mentoring opportunities.

Recipients should seek to learn more about specific aspects of station management (i.e., programmatic offerings, infrastructure, land management, research coordination) that are applicable to the needs of their home station. To this end, OBFS is offering travel awards of up to \$1,000 each that will facilitate multi-day shadowing experiences with host staff. Reciprocal (2-way) field station visits are highly encouraged and will receive priority. Applicants should complete the online [2025 OBFS Station Exchange Program Application](#) by **August 15, 2025**. Applications must include the following:

1. Letter of support from the field station they are visiting.
2. Short statement outlining and describing needs for cross training/shadowing experience.
3. Person/people you will be shadowing
4. Proposed travel dates, logistics and budget

Awardees will be notified on the status of their application by September 1.

For more information, please contact Itchung Cheung, Collaboration Committee Chair: itchung.cheung@oregonstate.edu



FUERTE: UCSB TRAINS UNDERGRADUATES IN CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CAREERS — BY CONNER PHILSON

The evidence is clear that undergraduate engagement in field-based education and research boosts graduation rates, STEM major retention, and GPAs.

This is why UC Santa Barbara's (UCSB) [Field-based Undergraduate Engagement through Research, Teaching, and Education](#) (FUERTE, which is Spanish for strong) is committed to providing research experience to all UCSB undergraduates.

Funded by the NSF, FUERTE is led by UCSB faculty and the UCSB's Natural Reserve System (NRS) and builds un-

dergraduates' foundation for success by developing the skills needed for a career in conservation and environmental sciences.

FUERTE Fellows take part in three major activities in the span of three summers, including an intensive field trip to [UCSB's Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory](#) (SNARL) in the Eastern Sierra Nevada mountains.

Read, watch, and learn more about the FUERTE program in action from the story and videos produced by UCSB's *The Current*: <https://news.ucsb.edu/featured/bridge-bright-future>.



Top: Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab.

Left: FUERTE director and principal investigator Gretchen Hofmann, left, and a student practice fieldwork techniques at Convict Lake. Photo Credit: Matt Perko.

Contact: Conner Philson, Executive Director, UCSB's Natural Reserve System, philson@ucsb.edu.

TOOLIK CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF MOMENTS BIG AND SMALL

— BY HALEY DUNLEAVY

On a July day in 1975, a team of six scientists based at the top of Alaska drove the newly finished Dalton Highway, searching for a deep, inland Arctic lake to compare to their coastal study lakes. After sampling a few sites for a spot that would be deep enough to have overwintering populations of fish, they settled on Toolik Lake, located in the northern foothills of the Brooks Range. The field crew set up their tents alongside a pipeline construction camp and began the long history of research at Toolik Lake.

Half a century later, the original research site, now known as Toolik Field Station, has grown to become the world's largest Arctic research station with a maximum population of 155 residents at one time. Thirteen labs, six dorms, three rows of WeatherPort lodging, a year-round dining hall, and six stalwart out-house towers annually support upwards of 500 scientists, students, support staff, and ed-

ucators. Operated by the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Institute of Arctic Biology with cooperative agreement support from the National Science Foundation, Toolik provides an extensive list of services to visiting projects and field courses: from meals and transportation to field safety, remote access support and 3D-printed equipment.

Yet, as all field station managers and staff know well, the imprint of Toolik's 50 years extends beyond the sum of its buildings and services. Often, the smallest moments leave the more lasting effect: the first sighting of the lake's resident pair of yellow-billed loons, the taste of a perfectly ripe cloudberry, a game of cribbage between colleagues on a -40° night, summer's first sunset, and even more visceral, winter's first sunrise.

We invite the OBFS community to join us in raising a glass (or Toolik mug) to 50 years of moments big and small at Toolik Field Station. To the people and the land who have made Toolik what it is today – and what it will be in the years to come, thank you!



Above: Scientists Jerry Brown, John Hobbie, Mike Miller, Phil Miller, and Vera Alexander near Toolik Lake in 1975. Photo by Pat Webber.

Learn more about [50 years of Toolik Field Station on our anniversary webpage](#) and stream recorded presentations from our [2025 All Scientists Meeting](#).

Contact: Haley Dunleavy, Communications Manager, hdunleavy@alaska.edu.

HOW TO FIND US

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[The Virtual Field](#)



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STACY MCNULTY, EDITOR
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TNC NATURE PROGRAM — BY KRISTEN REDD

The Nature Conservancy is excited to announce the official launch of the 2025 [Native American Tribes Undertaking Restoration and Education](#) (NATURE) Program!

The NATURE Program is an 8-week science and conservation leadership program for Indigenous college students from, or with a strong interest in, the Four Corners region (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah in the US).

This year, we are proud to welcome Jaiden Willetto, a Diné woman, as the 2025 NATURE Fellow. Jaiden serves as the Student Instructor, supporting and mentoring our cohort throughout the program. We have also welcomed eight outstanding undergraduate students representing six tribes: the Oglala Sioux, Miami, Mohawk, Navajo, Rosebud Sioux, and White Mountain Apache. Over the next eight weeks, students will be based in several locations, including The Nature Conservancy's [Canyonlands Research Center at Dugout Ranch](#).



Above: The Four Corners region of the Southwest US. Photo credit: Utah.com.

The program provides a unique opportunity for students to learn from Indigenous scientists, Western scientists, and traditional knowledge holders. Instruction will cover a wide range of topics, including: Climate Change and Climate Justice, Science and Conservation in Forested and Mountain Ecosystems, Riparian and River Restoration at the Mancos River, Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Land Management, and more.

Please join us via [Zoom](#) on **August 7th at 10:00** (US Mountain Time) to watch the student presentations.

Contact: Kristen Redd, Program Manager, Canyonlands Research Center, kristen.redd@TNC.ORG