



Natural Resource Quarterly | Summer 2018

Newsletter of the *National Capital Region Inventory & Monitoring Network*



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I&M Videos Highlight Shared Park Stories

[Image: Video still from "[Protecting and Growing a Healthy Forest](#)" Credit: NPS/Durham]

Rock Creek Park, Manassas National Battlefield Park, and Catoctin Mountain Park feature in two new videos about preserving urban national park resources and about healthy forest regeneration.



The videos are narrated by park and Inventory & Monitoring staff interviews--special thanks to Becky Loncosky and Ken Ferebee! They also include staff and stories from Northeast Region parks with similar issues including Gettysburg National Military Park, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area.

CLICK IMAGES TO GO TO VIDEO. Sharing of the videos is encouraged.

[Photo below: Video still from "[Protecting and Preserving Urban National Parks](#)" Credit: NPS/Durham]



Launch of New Partnership for Invasive Species



by Mark Frey, Exotic Plant Management Team Liaison

There is a new organization forming in the DC metro area focused on invasive species. The National Capital Region PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) is a collaborative effort to improve our ability to respond to invasive species issues in the region.

The NCR PRISM replaces (and expands) the DC Cooperative Weed Management Area (DC-CWMA). The DC-CWMA successfully connected land managers and land owners within the District and secured outside funds to conduct invasive plant control. In fact, our very own Nate Finney was a crew leader for the CWMA before he worked at C&O Canal and the regional Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT). But while the CWMA only worked in DC and only dealt with plants, **the NCR-PRISM will consider all taxa and operate in a wider region.** The PRISM defines the NCR as DC and the adjacent counties but will consider expanding that definition in the future.

Please consider attending and spreading the word about the **PRISM launch event:** Tuesday, July 31, 8:30 am to 2:00 pm, at the National Arboretum. [Register online](#). We'll be talking about how to collaborate, how to leverage data, and more.

If you can't attend the launch but you still want to be on the PRISM mailing list use the registration link to share with us your information. Please let your partners know about the PRISM and the event.

This group is meant to connect professionals involved in managing, studying, and teaching about invasive species. We overlap and are in close communication with a new PRISM forming in Northern Virginia.

[Photo: Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is one of the species that the NCR PRISM is on the look out for. It has been found nearby and has the potential to devastate native and agricultural plants. Credit: Lawrence Barringer, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org]

A Flare Up of Prescribed Fires in NCR

[Photo: The Wolf Rock burn at Catoctin Mountain Park. Credit: NPS]

This spring, three National Capital Region (NCR) parks used a very old natural resource

management tool for the first time: fire.

Fire was once a common on the lands that NCR parks protect, so prescribed burns are an effective way to manage landscapes for a variety of ills. Yet, NCR parks are generally small, and can sit close to roads and developed areas, so fires and smoke can pose real risks.



To get the benefits of a prescribed burn, and reduce any risks, lots of planning, monitoring of weather conditions, and a crew of trained firefighters were involved in these fires. As a result, all three were conducted safely and effectively. Here's where they happened and what the goals were:

Manassas National Battlefield Park used prescribed fire on a 60 acre parcel of rocky, overgrown field adjacent to the eastern edge of the Brawner Farm. The goal was to combat weeds and woody species and improve habitat for ground nesting birds in a grassy area where Civil War lines of sight and viewsheds need to be maintained.

Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts park managers oversaw a burn of the native meadow in front of the Filene Center to help native plants flourish while also controlling invasive plants and maintaining wildlife habitat. The fire was the first prescribed fire in Wolf Trap, as well as the first in Fairfax County, Virginia.

And perhaps most interestingly, **Catoctin Mountain Park** used prescribed fire to burn 6 acres of forest near Wolf Rock on the eastern side of the park. The goal of that fire was to restore natural processes that help fire-dependent native trees like table mountain pine and pitch pine reproduce and compete with other fire-intolerant tree species, thereby helping to restore the species composition of the forest. The table mountain pine, only found in the Appalachians, relies on fire to help release seeds from their tightly closed and resin-covered cones.

To learn more about these burns, view park press releases for [Catoctin](#), [Manassas](#), and [Wolf Trap](#).

Future projects are planned at Antietam, Monocacy, and possibly the C&O Canal. To learn more about fire management in National Capital Region parks contact Regional Wildland Fire Coordinator Jeffrey (Zeke) Seabright at 240-818-7151.

[Photo below: The grassland burn at Brawner Farm at Manassas National Battlefield Park
Credit: NPS/Gorsira]



Chesapeake Watershed CESU Updates

by Danny Filer, CW CESU Research Coordinator

[Photo: CW CESU Interns completing cataloging work at the Museum Resource Center. Credit: NPS]

New Members

The Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CW CESU) research network has been very busy over the winter! We are excited to announce twelve new members who were voted in to our network this spring:

- The Ecological Society of America
- Park Rx America
- Bowie State University
- Maryland Institute College of Art
- Morgan State University
- St. Mary's College of Maryland
- University of Maryland, Eastern Shore
- Binghamton University
- Ohio University
- Stroud Water Research Center
- University of Pennsylvania
- Longwood University



You can learn more about these partners by visiting the CW CESU [partner page](#) or the [new interactive map](#) displaying all non-federal partners on the network's homepage.

Annual Meeting

The 2018 Annual Meeting for the Chesapeake Watershed CESU research network will be held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia on Friday, June 8 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. We will be discussing updates in the program and presenting research from across the Chesapeake Watershed CESU research network that is ongoing or recently completed. Due to limited seating, we encourage folks to join us through a broadcast over NCTC's website at: <http://chwacesu.al.umces.edu/meetings-3/> .

Experts Database

Staff within the network have also been working on the development of an Experts Database. Representatives from the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science – Appalachian Laboratory, the Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel University, and Shippensburg University have

been providing input on the database construction. This database will allow researchers at any of the partner institutions/organizations in the CW CESU network to upload their curriculum vitae along with their background so federal partners can more easily find experts with the specialty skill they seek. The database will live on the CW CESU network homepage when completed and will be administered by the host institution, the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science – Appalachian Laboratory. We will present a “soft launch” of this database at the June 8 Annual Meeting and hope to launch the final product in late summer/early fall of 2018.

The Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CW CESU) promotes stewardship and integrated ecosystem management of natural and cultural resources in the Chesapeake Watershed through collaborative research, technical assistance, and education. To do research with the CW CESU, please contact Danny Filer at 301-689-7108.



UERLA Interns Develop Science Products for Parks



by Ann Gallagher, Science Education Coordinator

[Photo: The prescribed native meadow burn at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is the focus of a 2018 UERLA intern project. Credit: NPS]

Each year, UERLA mentors a diverse group of student interns who are pursuing higher education degrees or have recently graduated. They come from universities across the country from D.C. and Virginia, to

Wisconsin and California. And through their internship, all of them focus on a park science communication need.

Between January and June 2018 alone, UERLA supported 15 interns. One is a PhD, five are masters students, and the rest are completing undergraduate degrees. Their fields of scientific study include weather, climate, climate change and public health, biology, science and technology, chemistry, geology, ecology, and evolution. Other interns are pursuing science communication, journalism, filmmaking, and graphic design.

They work on projects involving hydrology, plant species recovery after prescribed burns, invertebrate identification, and weather and climate analyses. Some work on landscape-level projects examining ecological benefits of trees, geology, and resource adaptation. Each intern not only increases their understanding of the world through these park projects, but also helps increase the understanding of where the parks fit in the world.

The next UERLA intern to arrive is fresh from investigating ancient climate in Antarctica. On May 21, Dr. Laura Reynolds joins us as a Geoscientist-in-Parks intern. She will create geology highlights, content for park webpages, and interactive maps for the [NCR Explore Natural Communities website](#). Her strengths include a broad background in geosciences, a BA in Environmental Earth Sciences, a PhD in Geological Sciences, teaching experience with K-12 and undergraduates, and the ability to write for a general audience.

Part of her contribution to the region will also be to offer subject matter expert-level review for the products developed by this year's team of Integrated Resource Adaptation interns.

So be on the lookout for UERLA videos, research briefs, reports, and graphics, and more interns arriving this fall! Learn more at: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1027/uerla.htm>

Inventory & Monitoring Field Work in Your Park

During summer (June - August), I&M field work continues for amphibians, stream water quality, forest birds, grassland birds, and forest vegetation. A special I&M [tree coring project](#) is also underway this summer.



Amphibian Monitoring- runs through late July at C&O Canal, Manassas, Prince William, and Rock Creek, along with a yearly rotating group of other NCR parks.

Forest Bird Monitoring - runs from May to July at all I&M parks in NCR.

Grassland Bird Monitoring - runs from May to July at Antietam, Harpers Ferry, Manassas, and Monocacy.

Forest Vegetation - runs from May to September at all I&M parks in NCR.

Stream Water Quality - continues on a bi-monthly basis at all I&M parks in NCR except C&O Canal.

Calendar

JUNE

7. Invasive Plant Management Training at Fort Dupont. (This replaces the DC-CWMA / EPMT annual training). Contact Mark Frey.

8. CW CESU (Chesapeake Watershed, Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit) Annual Meeting. National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Attendance is limited, so this event will be live-streamed. See <http://chwacesu.al.umces.edu/meetings-3/> for details.

JULY

19. Natural Resource Advisory Team (NAT) Meeting. National Mall and Memorial Parks.

31. Launch of the NCR Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM). National Arboretum. 8:30 am to 2:00 pm. To register visit: <https://tinyurl.com/PRISM-Launch>

The NCRN Natural Resource Quarterly newsletter will take a hiatus following this issue. We hope to be back sometime in calendar year 2019.

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