

Climate Change Response Program  
Communications Corner



# October 2018 Update

**PROPOSALS NOW ACCEPTED**



## Now Open: Combined Call for Internship Project Proposals

A combined call for internship proposals for 3 popular NRSS internship programs (including the Future Park Leaders of Emerging Change) is now open and will close on October 19, 2018. During this combined call, parks, programs, and offices are encouraged to review program specifics and submit internship proposals to support their operations. Full program details and application instructions are available through the [NRSS Internships Google Site](#).

## BE A CLIMATE WATCH COORDINATOR Online Training October 3



Have you heard of the National Audubon Society's [Climate Watch program](#)? Your park can help monitor effects of climate change on bird species distributions through this citizen science effort.

Climate Watch Coordinators are needed to support the next survey season happening January 15 - February 15, 2019. If you are interested in being a coordinator, a n introductory training will be held Wednesday, October 3 at 4pm EDT. This training will cover everything you need to know to coordinate the program locally, including information on survey planning, volunteer recruitment, and data entry. [Register here](#).

Returning Coordinators are welcome to join the general training above or register for [an abbreviated training](#) that will cover changes to the program for the Winter 2019 season. This session will occur Tuesday, October 2 at 12pm EDT.

The [Climate Watch Coordinator website](#) will host recordings of the trainings if you can't make it . Please direct any questions to [climatewatch@audubon.org](mailto:climatewatch@audubon.org) .

## Read the NPS Sustainability Newsletter!

Did you know the NPS Sustainable Operations Program has a newsletter about upcoming events, training, and news? [Read the latest newsletter here](#) , and contact [sustainability@nps.gov](mailto:sustainability@nps.gov) to subscribe!



## Managing Whitebark Pine in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem



Prepared by Kristin L. Legg (Greater Yellowstone Network) and Kathryn B. Ireland (World Wildlife Fund)

In 2011 the Greater Yellowstone Interagency Whitebark Pine Subcommittee finalized the Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Strategy. The subcommittee noted in the report that there was not enough information at the time to understand the impacts of climate change on whitebark pine. Since then there have been numerous studies that look at the vulnerability of the species in the Greater Yellowstone Area and also explore adaptation options for whitebark pine conservation.

Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) is considered a keystone species in upper elevations where treeline transitions into alpine. Stands of trees provide many ecosystem services such as tasty and highly nutritional seeds for wildlife, snow retention into the summer, and suitable habitat for other plant species to establish.

The tree is threatened by many factors such as the non-native white pine blister rust, native mountain pine beetle that is occurring in higher elevations as a result of warming temperatures, changes in wildland fire regimes and past fire management practices, and direct and indirect effects of climate change such as increased drought and more favorable conditions at higher elevations for other trees species that could outcompete smaller whitebark pine.

The most recent publication, *Putting Climate Adaptation on the Map: Developing Spatial Management Strategies for Whitebark Pine in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem*, explored how to spatially allocate actions outlined in the strategy under two scenarios while incorporating climate projections. The first scenario was business as usual, meaning following the strategy as described which meets current policies (i.e. wilderness) and logistical constraints (i.e. distance from roads) across all agencies. The second scenario looked at conservation actions if climate change projections for whitebark pine and competing tree species were considered and if there were no policy or logistical constraints. As one might expect there were more areas available for implementing adaptation actions without the constraints although there are areas where there was overlap across the different management scenarios. These areas of overlap could be good candidate locations for experimental management actions and monitoring.

This study is informative to the Whitebark Pine Subcommittee and others working on whitebark pine conservation, as it provides one more piece to the climate adaptation puzzle. While this study benefited from the already established Whitebark Pine Strategy, this modeling approach to spatially prioritize management actions can be applied to other species and ecosystems. It is important to note that this study is also a great example of collaboration and coproduction between scientists and land managers. There were frequent 'check-ins' throughout the study which led to both the scientists and managers becoming better informed on the outcomes and applications of management actions.

## **FREE & UNLIMITED: On Demand Climate Change Training**

The Climate Change Response Program invites interested NPS employees, contractors, and volunteers to enjoy unlimited access to the Association of Climate Change Officers (ACCO) [library of on-demand and live online training](#) FREE for one full year. This opportunity affords participants unparalleled flexibility to customize training according to their needs and work around busy schedules.

Availability is limited and will be awarded strictly on a first-come, first serve basis. For instructions on how to register for this opportunity, please contact Larry Perez at [larry\\_perez@nps.gov](mailto:larry_perez@nps.gov).



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