

# Cooperative Research Units Program

The Cooperative Research Units program is a unique model of cooperative partnerships among Federal and State Governments, academia, and the Wildlife Management Institute. These partnerships are maintained as one of USGS's strongest links to Federal and State land and natural resource management agencies.

The Cooperative Wildlife Research Units program was established in 1935 to meet the need for trained personnel in the rapidly growing field of wildlife management, and to provide better technical information for professional wildlife managers. In 1960 Congress enacted Public Law 86-686, which extended statutory recognition to the program and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements with universities, State fish and wildlife agencies, and non-profit organizations to coordinate fish and wildlife research and training programs.

The Cooperative Research Units program consists of 40 Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units located on university campuses in 38 states. The mission of the Cooperative Research Units program is threefold: 1) to provide scientific research for the understanding and management of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources; 2) to provide technical assistance to natural resource managers in the application of scientific information to natural resource policy and management; and 3) to train future natural resource professionals.

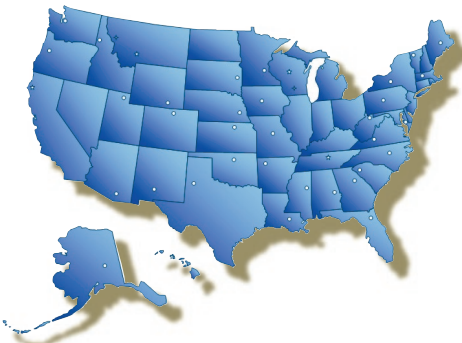
The USGS provides 2 to 5 federal research scientists for each Cooperative Research Unit. Cooperating universities provide office space, administrative support, and access to university facilities. The State game and fish agencies provide base funding and logistical support for research activities. The Wildlife Management



*Unit students learning ecological concepts in the field*

Institute provides oversight and coordination of the program at a national level. The pooling of resources from all cooperators achieves a multiplier effect for everyone, thus enhancing the program's cost-effectiveness to each Cooperator.

During FY 2002, Unit scientists published 357 scientific papers, submitted 122 reports to management agencies, presented 682 papers at professional society meetings, and conducted over 50 workshops, symposia and training sessions for natural resource professionals. In total, over 1,000 research projects were active in FY 2002. Unit projects covered a wide range of topics of interest to resource managers, including biodiversity, instream flow, anadromous fish, migratory birds, inland fisheries, non-migratory wildlife species, wetland management and restoration, wildlife diseases, inventory and monitoring methodologies and applications, ecotoxicology,



*Locations of Cooperative Research Units*

aquaculture, landscape ecology, and endangered species conservation.

Through affiliations with host universities, Unit scientists advise and mentor more than 600 graduate students annually. Ninety-six of these students received graduate degrees in FY 2002. The Unit program also sponsors undergraduate and graduate education programs for minorities. These efforts focus on minority student recruitment and career training in natural resources and include USGS programs for minority students at University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, and University of Arizona.

Unit scientists conduct applied research on contemporary fish and wildlife issues that address the needs of state and federal cooperators and partners.



*Burrowing owls are currently under study throughout the west*

Recent research projects include:

- Distribution of moose relative to fire history in Alaska
- Stocking strategies for cutthroat trout in Colorado
- Baiting/feeding impacts on chronic wasting disease incidence in Wisconsin
- Habitat assessments for loggerhead, green, and kemp's ridley sea turtles
- System development for national Bird Banding databases
- Decision support tool for Roanoke-Tar-Neuse-Cape Fear Ecosystem
- Habitat model for endangered aplomado falcon in New Mexico
- Control of whirling disease in hatcheries
- Migration routes for redhead ducks
- Economic impacts of sportfisheries
- Desert bighorn sheep population assessment in New Mexico
- Northern bobwhite quail survey techniques
- Burning to control cattails on National Wildlife Refuges
- Black bear population dynamics and genetics in Big Bend National Park
- Impacts of land use change on Vermont's biodiversity
- Habitat restoration priorities for endangered chinook salmon

## For more information

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