

A few words about Landscape Conservation Cooperatives and Climate Science Centers

By Melanie Wood and Cat Hawkins Hoffman¹

In September 2009, Secretary Salazar issued Secretarial Order 3289, "Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and Other Natural and Cultural Resources." This directive established cooperatives for public-private partnerships among departmental bureaus and their partners to collaborate in responding to climate change and other stressors. As a result the Department of the Interior has established a national network of 21 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) that support and enhance on-the-ground conservation efforts by facilitating the production and dissemination of applied science for resource management decision makers. Now at various stages of development, the LCCs consist of federal, state, tribal, local, nonprofit, and private stakeholders working with existing partnerships and programs, and establishing new partnerships, to facilitate communication, share the results of research, and strategically target and implement additional research and actions to meet shared conservation goals. In addition to these cooperatives, eight university-based, regional Climate Science Centers (CSCs) ultimately will be established to support the LCCs and other partnerships by providing scientific information, tools, and techniques to land managers as they respond to climate change.

The National Park Service fully supports and participates in these initiatives through park, regional, and national participation in the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, and by staffing full-time positions at five of the LCCs and three of the CSCs. The Park Service is colead with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the Great Northern LCC and has recently hired a cultural resource specialist and a socioeconomic adaptation coordinator, to be stationed at the Pacific Islands LCC and South Atlantic LCC, respectively. The two remaining NPS LCC positions will provide such expertise as coastal ecosystems and geomorphology for the North Atlantic LCC and urban landscapes in the National Capital Region, which will work across parks and LCCs that have urban landscapes. The three NPS CSC positions are expected to be filled in FY 2012 in Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest.

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¹ See table 1, page 11, for author contact information.