

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

among the

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO-MAYAGÜEZ CAMPUS

PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY-COOPERATIVE RESEARCH UNITS PROGRAM

and the

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE

Pertaining to

THE CARIBBEAN TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a framework for coordination and collaboration among the University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Research Units Program, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region to explore opportunities and mechanisms to establish a Caribbean Training and Recruitment Cooperative Program.

The Parties in this MOU are seeking new avenues to identify qualified students in Puerto Rico and provide them with greater opportunities for career advancement and recruitment into the local and federal natural resource agencies and other positions in the natural resources profession.

STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT

The Cooperative Research Units Program has had a long and fruitful collaboration with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region. Since 1988, over 20 students from Puerto Rico, the United States and South America, and 3 Post-Doctoral Research Associates have been trained or hired to address research and management challenges in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Four of the students were trained through the graduate program of the Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus. Ten of the trainees have been recruited by the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources (4) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (6).

Cultural and language affinity, geographic proximity, and institutional resources and standing also underscore the suitability of the University of Puerto Rico (Mayagüez Campus) as an institution for graduate training of qualified students from the Caribbean region. Such training opportunities benefit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and other federal agencies working to protect shared resources via regional and hemispheric-wide conservation initiatives.

AUTHORITIES

The U.S. Geological Survey, as represented by the Cooperative Research Units, is authorized under Public Law 95-616 (92 Stat. 3110) November 8, 1978, to enter into memoranda of understanding and cooperative agreements with state fish and wildlife departments for the purpose of developing research and training programs for fish and wildlife resources; and

The Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, represented by its Subsecretary, the Honorable Javier Rua Jovet, is empowered by the Organic Law #23 of 1972 to enter into agreements and investigate questions relating to fish and wildlife, to initiate and conduct inquiries pertaining to such questions, and to conduct such biological research that in its opinion will conserve, improve, and enhance the status of the fish and wildlife resources in the

state of Puerto Rico; and The University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus, represented by its Chancellor, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho, is empowered by its Organic Law, #1 of January 20th, 1966 to conduct academic and research activities and to enter into agreements pursuant to the education and training of capable professionals and to the enhancement of pure and applied scientific knowledge while providing for the development of Puerto Rico, its resources and the international community.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as represented by the Southeast Region, is authorized to enter into this memorandum of understanding under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661-667e); and Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742(a)-754). The USFWS Agreement No. in this case is 401818K510.

OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Explore opportunities and mechanisms to establish a Caribbean Training and Recruitment Cooperative Program. The following objectives will be addressed over the next three years. Objectives are listed under a timetable to provide a basis for all Parties to assess progress and project accomplishments.

January – December 2008

1. Develop a framework and agreements to permit Unit scientists to offer graduate-level coursework at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus as well as offer short-courses and workshops to foster career development of natural resources professionals in the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and pertinent federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).
2. Develop a framework and agreements for Unit scientists to recruit and train graduate students from Puerto Rico through the graduate program of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus.
3. Develop a framework and process to consult the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and pertinent federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) to identify priority projects whose goals and needs could be met by means of recruiting and supporting graduate students from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus.
4. Recruit and train a graduate student(s) from Puerto Rico under the auspices, goals and timeline of this MOU. The project(s) will effectively serve as a “demonstration project” to showcase program effectiveness and benefits sought by Parties in this MOU.

January – December 2009

1. Develop a framework and agreements for a graduate student exchange program between the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez and Cooperating universities in the Units Program, and to increase the capabilities of Unit host universities to recruit Puerto Ricans into stateside academic programs. Agreements will include mechanisms to credit participating students for coursework, and at the discretion of the graduate committee, become part of the graduate coursework plan.

2. Develop a framework and agreements to enable graduate students working with Unit scientists at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez to compete for training opportunities under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) sponsored by various federal natural resources agencies.

January – December 2010

1. Showcase accomplishments (e.g., MS Program) and potential career opportunities for the student(s) participating in the Demonstration Project(s).
2. Finalize MOUs among the University of Puerto Rico (Mayagüez Campus), Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources and the Units Program to assist both federal and local government agencies in meeting their conservation and recruiting needs through greater training opportunities.
3. Constitute, if agreed by all Parties, a Steering Committee to monitor the status and progress of the Program as stipulated under signed agreements.
4. Explore the possibility of extending opportunities to students from the U.S. Virgin Islands and of including natural resources agencies from the U.S. Virgin Islands to be participating members of the Program.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The U.S. Geological Survey shall:

- 1) Authorize a Unit Scientist to dedicate time to address and complete objectives identified in this MOU.
- 2) Provide access to the expertise, facilities, and resources available through the Cooperative Research Units program in accordance with the directions of the Unit Cooperators and in terms set forth in the Cooperative Agreements of the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units.
- 3) Provide \$8,000 annually, as funds are available, for operational support of the Caribbean Training and Recruitment Cooperative Program to (a) complete project objectives (e.g., travel); (b) invite USGS scientists to offer courses at the Mayagüez Campus Department of Biology; and (c) support prospective students to visit Science Centers or Universities associated with Units Program to participate in training, as well as facilities from other federal agencies as opportunities and resources arise.

The University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus shall:

- 1) Provide office space and clerical support for the Program's Unit Scientist and guest scientists to support Program activities (e.g., course work), as necessary. Support will be coordinated in advance with the Department Head.
- 2) Extend an adjunct appointment to the Program's Unit Scientist to recruit and train a graduate student(s) from Puerto Rico through the graduate program of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus.

The Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources shall:

- 1) Authorize the participation of Departmental staff on short-courses on the topics of fisheries and wildlife management at the Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus.
- 2) Provide access where feasible and appropriate to managed lands under the jurisdiction of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region shall:

- 1) Authorize the participation of Regional staff on short-courses on the topics of fisheries and wildlife management at the Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus, and if funds are available, cover the costs incurred in traveling to Puerto Rico.
- 2) Provide access where feasible and appropriate to managed lands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

All Parties shall:

- 1) Look for opportunities to partner with other agencies and conservation groups not currently included as signatories to this MOU and as appropriate and by consensus, consider inviting other groups to join the MOU as signatories.
- 2) Cooperate in the planning, execution, and review of research, training, and technical assistance provided by participants of the Caribbean Cooperative Training and Recruitment Program.

REQUIRED CLAUSES

- 1) This MOU does not replace line supervisory authorities of member organizations, nor does it relieve staff in the Cooperative Research Units Program of their responsibilities under the implementing authorities of their parent organizations.
- 2) Participation of the Parties in this MOU is not intended to place said Parties in a position of liability for claims that arise as a result of project activities. Each Party shall have responsibility for acts and injury to, or injury and damage caused by, its own personnel and its property, occurring incidental to the conduct of approved projects initiated under his agreement.
- 3) All funds contributed to the operation of the Caribbean Cooperative Training and Recruitment Program under terms of this MOU will be obligated and controlled by the contributing agency using agency procurement mechanisms, unless mechanisms are identified and approved by the contributing agency.

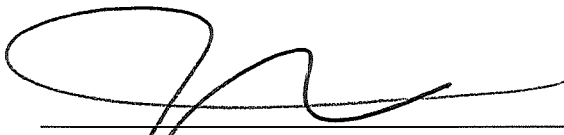
EFFECTIVE DATE, MODIFICATION, AND TERMINATION

This MOU becomes effective on the date of the last signature and will remain in effect for a period of 3 years (2008-2010). This MOU may be modified at any time upon joint approval. This MOU may be terminated at any time by mutual written agreement of the Parties, or by any Party following 90 days written notice of one Party to the other Parties.

POINT OF CONTACT


A representative of the U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Research Units Program, selected in consultation with all Parties in this MOU, will assume the responsibility to coordinate, formalize or expand the partnerships that have existed among the University of Puerto Rico (Mayagüez Campus), Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region and the Cooperative Research Units Program to meet MOU objectives. The Program's representative will be responsible for reporting to each of the Parties in this MOU, in a written concise fashion, on the progress and accomplishments of the Program on or before January 30 of 2009 (interim annual report), 2010 (interim annual report), and 2011 (final report).

SIGNATURES:



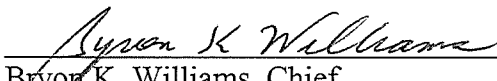
Jorge Ivan Vélez Arocho, Chancellor
University of Puerto Rico – Mayagüez Campus

Date: 21 August 2008



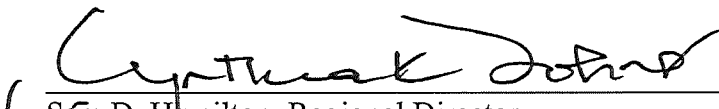
Javier Rúa-Jové, Subsecretary
PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

Date: 17 Jun 2008



Bryon K. Williams, Chief
U.S. Geological Survey - Cooperative Research Units

Date: 5/14/08



Sam D. Hamilton, Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region

Date: 5/22/08