

Cooperative Research Units Program

The Cooperative Research Units program is a unique model of cooperative partnerships among Federal and State Governments, Universities, 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 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 threefold mission of the Cooperative Research Units program is to:

- 1) conduct scientific research for the management of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources;
- 2) provide technical assistance to natural resource managers in the application of scientific information to natural resource policy and management; and
- 3) train future natural resource professionals.

The USGS funds 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 agencies provide base funding and logistical support for research activities. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is a formal cooperator at many Units, funding

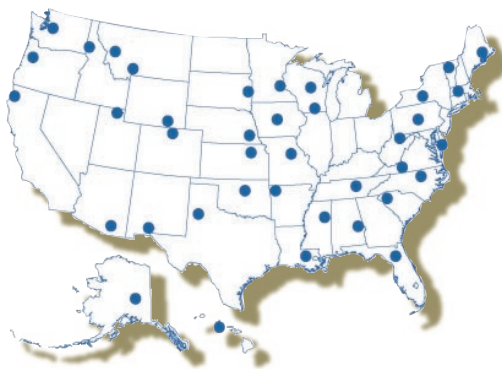


Joseph Zydlewski / Maine Unit

Maine Unit graduate student Christopher Holbrook tags an adult Atlantic salmon sampled from the Penobscot River.

research projects and providing access to facilities. The Wildlife Management 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 2006, Unit scientists published 288 scientific papers, submitted 123 reports to management agencies, and conducted 38 workshops, symposia and training sessions for natural resource professionals. In total, 1,052 research projects were active in FY 2006. 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, aquaculture, landscape ecology, and endangered species conservation.



Locations of Cooperative Research Units

Through affiliations with host universities, Unit scientists advise and mentor more than 600 graduate students annually. One hundred thirty-two of these students received graduate degrees in FY 2006. 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.



Matthew Shumar / West Virginia Unit

The Cerulean warbler is one of the high-priority, forest dependent birds that breeds in the mountain-top mining region of West Virginia and Kentucky.

Recent research projects include:

- Movements and habitat selection of pygmy rabbits, OR
- Red wolf population studies at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, NC
- Studies of sauger nursery areas in the Wind River system, WY
- GIS-based habitat modeling to identify stream segment quality smallmouth bass population potential, MO
- Control methods for New Zealand mudsnails for western waterways and fish hatcheries, ID
- Methodological assessments of herbicides to control invasive alligator weed, AL
- Sage grouse breeding ecology studies in the Powder River basin, WY
- King eider, shorebird, and raven studies of population dynamics and foraging habitats, AK
- Modeling of density and distribution of forest-dependent songbirds in the mountaintop mining region, KY and WV
- Influence of coalbed methane production on groundwater and fish assemblages, MT
- Radio-tracking of white-tailed deer in Assateague Island National Seashore, VA
- Migration monitoring of adult Atlantic salmon in the Penobscot River, ME
- Wind turbine bird mortality studies, SD
- Genetic stock structure studies of Lake Michigan whitefish populations, WI

For more information

U.S. Geological Survey
 Cooperative Research Units Program
 MS 303, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
 Reston, VA 20192
 phone: (703) 648-4260
<http://www.coopunits.org>