

Boise State University Partners with the National Park Service, through the Rocky Mountains CESU, to Develop Methods to Assess the Possible Impact of Climate Change on Cultural Resources:

Boise State University, in partnership with the National Park Service, is investigating the vulnerability of cultural and historic resources in National Park units due to climate change. In spring 2019, Associate Professor Pei-Lin Yu from the Boise State Department of Anthropology worked with the National Park Service's Climate Change Response Program to author a national analysis of cultural heritage vulnerability reports in national parks.

To build on the report's recommendations for best practices and address data gaps, Pei-Lin Yu and anthropology master's student Jennifer Cuthbertson conducted a workshop for park managers and scientists in Santa Fe and Bandelier National Monument, New Mexico, in June 2019. These projects were funded through the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit agreement.

The workshop was led by faculty at Boise State, the University of Arizona and the University of Pennsylvania, and was designed to help park science staff and managers develop methods to conduct vulnerability assessments that are integrated across natural ecosystems and cultural heritage. The immediate objective of the workshop was to build a "community of practice" for parks, regional



Ladder to Alcove House, Bandelier National Monument. Photo: P. Yu.

technical support offices, and research partners in universities and non-governmental organizations. And these methods were tested in the field at Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico, home to an ancient ancestral Puebloan community.



Workshop participants assessing the vulnerability of cultural resources in the field, Bandelier National Monument, 2019. Photo: P. Yu.

This RM CESU project will ultimately result in a vulnerability assessment guidebook for park managers and partners. This will allow individual parks to know how to respond to fires, floods, debris flows and other extreme climate events to protect irreplaceable cultural resources.