

# ADAPTIVE SILVICULTURE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS INTERNSHIP LARIMER COUNTY

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## PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Alongside CSU Extension, this summer I interned with the Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change (ASCC) Network. The ASCC Network was created in 2009, after climate change science experts and natural resource professionals recognized the need for land management that not only considered the future impacts of climate change, but actively managed forests to respond to and survive within our changing climate. Forestry and silviculture are very scientific fields, and it is difficult to encourage foresters to use “climate-adaptive” management without solid evidence that it will help keep their forests healthy and functioning. By uniting researchers, land managers, and other community partners, the ASCC Network provides local examples of climate-adaptive silviculture paired with the latest science to support new and innovative management strategies.

Each individual ASCC site is led by a researcher and manager who collaborate with the ASCC Network leads and local experts to plan scientifically designed forestry treatments. These treatments must address climate projects while achieving local values, management goals, and ecosystem services. Each site is testing four climate-adaptive treatments: resistance, resilience, transition, and no action.



## INTERNSHIP GOALS

- Develop communications plans for both land managers and scientists within the ASCC Network and external audiences including foresters in the natural resources field interested in learning more about climate-adaptive forest management demonstrations; and
- Assess and summarize applied research related to climate change adaptation and forest management in Colorado;
- Provide a bridge between scientists/practitioners/land managers and diverse audiences interested in climate-adaptive forest management strategies;
- Effectively communicate lessons learned from the ASCC Network sites with diverse audiences interested in applying climate adaptation actions in on-the-ground management.

## HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO YOUR EDUCATION

As a Forest and Rangeland Stewardship major with a concentration in Rangeland/Forest Management and a minor Global Environmental Sustainability, many of the topics I was researching and communicating were familiar to me. This internship allowed me to dedicate time to understanding these topics in more detail and encouraged me to expand the way I thought about natural resource communications. Since my coursework focuses more on the technical and ecological aspects of forestry, my work with CSU Extension and the ASCC Network allowed me to further develop my communications and outreach skills while deepening my understanding of forestry by allowing me to apply my knowledge throughout the course of the summer.

## WHAT YOU DID

Over the summer I was able to pursue a variety of different tasks to address the ASCC Network’s communication needs. Of course, to be able to communicate all the amazing management and research taking place throughout the ASCC Network, I spent the first week exploring the academic literature surrounding climate-adaptive land management and the ASCC Network itself. I then spent the summer working on a variety of different projects, highlighted below:

- Drafted website content for the most recent addition to the ASCC Network, the Robinson Forest in Kentucky. After incorporating feedback from several site and project managers, I created and published the webpage on the ASCC website using Drupal.
- Developed content for the Northern Institute for Applied Climate Science (NIACS) demonstration pages for the Robinson Forest (KY) and the Kiwanis Club Pembroke Property (ON, CA).
- Collected feedback from site leads for all 14 ASCC sites to make all needed updates on the ASCC website.
- Designed and sent the annual ASCC Newsletter after collecting responses from site leads for all 14 ASCC sites.
- Designed and updated multiple social media posts and informational flyers using Canva.
- Drafted an educational plan to be used by Extension summer camps or other educational events comprising of introductory materials for educators and 5 lessons modified using Project Learning Tree curriculum to introduce students to climate-adaptive forest management including supplementary materials to create more locally-adapted lessons that focus on Colorado ecology and management.
- Created a communications plan for the three ASCC sites in Colorado summarizing suggested communications tactics and audiences, contacts, and resources.

Use the QR code to the right to view some of the projects I’ve worked on throughout the course of my internship.



## NEXT STEPS

I believe this internship was enormously helpful in shaping my career path and my final year at CSU. The work I have been able to do this summer, along with Courtney and Lisa’s guidance and support, has encouraged me to continue working and improving on my forestry outreach, communication, and educational skills.

My work during the school year with Project Learning Tree (PLT) and this internship helped me realize my academic interest in climate change and adaptive land management, and, particularly, in education and public outreach surrounding these topics. This internship inspired me to refine my honors thesis, and I will now be creating a comprehensive guide for educators in Colorado to teach middle- and high-school students about climate-adaptive management in our state. I hope to provide the final project to both the ASCC Network, the Extension program, and the Colorado PLT Network.

## WHAT YOU LEARNED

My main project throughout the summer was to create a communications plan for the three ASCC sites in Colorado: the Colorado State Forest Site, the Taylor Park Site in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests, and the San Juan Site in the San Juan National Forest. While this was initially out of my comfort zone, it allowed me to explore different avenues for communicating about natural resources projects and issues that I hadn’t ever considered before. Throughout the summer I was able to work on a variety of projects that introduced me to the different avenues and methods for communicating within the ASCC Network and with the public. Overall, the process of creating the communications plan and working with many different people helped teach me first-hand about the collaborative process of creating and revising communication materials.

Finally, this internship helped foster my academic and professional interest in climate change communication and education. As well, Courtney and Lisa introduced me to countless resources and professionals I will certainly use and reach back out to going forward in my career journey.



Figure 1. (images)

These images were taken during my site visit at the Taylor Park ASCC Site. I was lucky enough to accompany Courtney King’s monitoring crew into the field and help take measurements at a few plots.