

## For Immediate Release

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## Cedar Breaks National Monument works with SUU to create wayside exhibits

CEDAR CITY — Southern Utah University's Zion Group Alliance for Education continues to pay dividends for its members, and the benefits are being passed on to visitors at Cedar Breaks National Monument.

Under the direction of Southern Utah University's Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative and Cedar Breaks staff, SUU students are creating interpretive wayside exhibits and additional video features for the interactive kiosk at the Monument Visitor Center.

When completed, the project will feature 13 wayside exhibits, Cedar Breaks Superintendent Paul Roelandt said.

"The project plan outlines a process to create the waysides electronically," Roelandt said. "The actual wayside panels and stands will be physically installed as we get funding over the next few years."

The wayside exhibits will orient Cedar Breaks visitors to the park and educate them about the park's resources, such as its history, geology, wildlife, and plants.

SUU students are shooting and editing video that will be added to the existing interactive video screen at the Cedar Breaks Visitor Center.

"We currently have a touch-screen video that focuses on various stories about the history of the monument, which we put together as part of our 75th anniversary celebration back in 2008," Roelandt said. "Once the students complete the additional segments they are working on, we will add them to what our visitors can learn using the same touch-screen."

Roelandt expressed satisfaction at the overall progress of the two projects.

"There have been some delays getting everything started, but overall we are happy with the development team that has been assembled to oversee keeping these projects moving," he said.

Both projects are funded by Cedar Breaks National Monument as part of the Zion Group Alliance for Education, a cooperative agreement between SUU, Zion National Park, and Cedar Breaks and Pipe Springs national monuments.

The alliance was created to establish a mutually beneficial working relationship and seeks to further the respective mission of each participant.

For the parks, that mission includes protecting park resources and providing for visitor opportunities to enjoy those resources, educating visitors about the resources, and providing for opportunities to expand our knowledge of the resources.

For SUU, it includes access to experiential learning in a diverse, dynamic and personalized environment. As SUU students participate in the alliance, they enhance the economic, social and cultural development of the communities the university serves.

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Steve McCarthy, public-lands agency coordinator for the Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative, has overseen the wayside and video projects with input from Roelandt and assistance from SUU faculty and NPS visitor-education staff.

He said the process to hire student team members with the right skills began last year during Public Lands Employment Day, an event sponsored by the IIC and SUU's Academic and Career Development Center.

"As they continue to develop, the waysides and video projects will be very informative to community members that visit the monument," McCarthy said.

The collaboration between Cedar Breaks and the IIC has led to student internships at the park and in administrative offices in Cedar City, he said.

Internships allow students to pursue careers with the National Park Service or other public-lands agencies, he added.

"It's always good to see students getting experience in their respective fields of study," McCarthy said.

Roelandt said he hopes the collaboration brings real-life projects to students entering these fields of study.

"The opportunity to be involved in developing a professional product will be good for both the students and for Cedar Breaks," he said. "Developing waysides is a little known but important skill that helps educate visitors about park history and resources."

One of the students involved in the wayside project is Jade Gelskey, a senior graphic design major from Ely, Nev., who served as a team leader for one of the wayside designs.

Gelskey said the project was recommended to her by an SUU professor during one of her classes.

"I was interested right away," Gelskey said. "I have a background in working with government agencies such as the Park Service and the Forest Service, and I felt that I was a good candidate for the project."

Gelskey said she was then introduced to McCarthy and began working on the project shortly afterward.

She said she believes the projects will enhance any park visitor's experience.

"The waysides we are working on will help visitors gain a better understanding of the huge impact and grand scale of beauty that Cedar Breaks has to offer," she said.

"I also think that when visitors see the public-lands agencies taking the time to add things that are specifically for the visitor, they always feel better about coming back," she added.

Gelskey said she thinks the wayside project will be an important step in her professional development as a graphic artist.

"I personally am happy to have participated, and I feel like I learned a lot about wayside design as well as project management," she said. "They are two very important skills for my future as a graphic designer, which is what I went to school for."

Gelskey said she looks forward to seeing the completed waysides at the monument.

"A lot of people spent many hours working on them," she said. "We hope the public enjoys them and is able to gain something more from them than they were getting before while visiting the monument."