

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

CONFLUENCE LAB



Confluence Lab Co-Founders Teresa Cavazos Cohn, Erin James, and Jennifer Ladino

Like everyone else, we felt the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Yet despite challenges, the Confluence Lab has several exciting accomplishments to celebrate. At the end of year one, we had five projects underway. In year two, we have launched two new major grant-funded projects, both related to fire and storytelling. Together, the projects we've embarked on in our first two years have secured \$700,000 of external funding, in addition to internal grant support from the University of Idaho. Most importantly, the Confluence Lab is building bridges across campus and creating closer ties with colleagues and community residents across the state.

Our most recent grant, from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, expands those connections regionally as we partner with the University of Oregon's Center for Environmental Futures and Whitman College to develop a "Pacific Northwest Just Futures Institute for Racial and Climate Justice." We are thrilled about this latest project, which begins right away in 2021 and will bring a diverse team together at the UI under the Lab's umbrella.



NEW PROJECTS



COMMUNICATING FIRE: INTEGRATIVE LEARNING THROUGH PARTICIPATORY NARRATIVES

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, \$299,911

Teresa Cavazos Cohn, Erin James, Leda Kobziar, Jennifer Ladino, Kayla Bordelon, Michael Decker, Jack Kredell

A two-year interdisciplinary project that explores the efficacy of using personal narratives of wildfire to increase participation in informal STEM learning in rural Idaho. Bringing together a science communicator, a narrative theorist, a fire ecologist, and a specialist on emotions and public lands, our interdisciplinary research team focuses on broadening participation in STEM by exploring two main questions: what characteristics of narrative are most effective in fire science communication, and what audience-centered approaches work best when facilitating participant narratives in informal STEM learning?

STORIES OF FIRE: A PACIFIC NORTHWEST CLIMATE JUSTICE ATLAS

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION, \$340,437

Erin James, Jennifer Ladino, Stacy Isenbarger, Teresa Cavazos Cohn

A three-year project that is part of the Pacific Northwest Just Futures Institute for Racial and Climate Justice (total grant \$4.52 million). The Institute is a collaboration between the Confluence Lab, the University of Oregon, and Whitman College that works toward racial and climate justice via a regional network. Members of the Confluence Lab will consult with local rural community partners to create a multimodal, polyvocal Atlas that gathers, tracks, and maps stories and images of wildfire, especially those that foreground connections between fire, social/environmental justice, and traditionally underrepresented voices.

STORYING EXTINCTION: RESPONDING TO THE LOSS OF NORTH IDAHO'S MOUNTAIN CARIBOU

\$4,100

Christopher Lamb, Jack Kredell

Funded primarily via the UI Library's Center for Digital Inquiry and Learning (CDIL) Fellowship program with support from the Confluence Lab, this multi-layered, interdisciplinary digital map explores the 2019 extirpation of the mountain woodland caribou in North Idaho and the community's response to the elimination of the last caribou population in the contiguous United States.

2020

EVENTS

icarus Quartet residency, with public workshops of "Wilderness Suite" and discussion of interdisciplinary work featuring Ruby Fulton, Teresa Cavazos Cohn, and Benjamin James, University of Idaho, February

"Beyond the Book" Series Discussions, by Jennifer Ladino and Erin James, University of Idaho Sustainability Center, February

"Confluence Lab," Malcolm Renfrew Colloquium presentation by Project PIs, University of Idaho, March

"Confluence Lab at the University of Idaho" presentation by Teresa Cavazos Cohn, Jennifer Ladino, and Erin James, "Climate Sensing and Data Storytelling" Symposium, University of Pennsylvania, May

"Wilderness Suite" film-in-progress viewing, 2020 New Music Gathering, Portland OR, June

"Wilderness Suite: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Change in the Big Creek Drainage in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness" presentation by Ruby Fulton, Teresa Cavazos Cohn, and Benjamin James, Organization of Biological Field Stations Annual Meeting, September

"Storying Extinction: Responding to the Loss of North Idaho's Mountain Caribou" presentation by Christopher Lamb and Jack Kredell, Multispecies Heritage conference, Edge Hill University, UK, November

2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit from Jon Christensen, co-founder of UCLA's Laboratory for Environmental Narrative Strategies (LENS), with screening of new documentary **The New West and the Politics of the Environment** and student workshop in environmental journalism and media; co-sponsored by Confluence Lab and UI's School of Journalism and Mass Media, March 10

icarus Quartet visit to Taylor Wilderness Research Station, April

Climate Stories Workshop with the **Climate Stories Project**, co-sponsored by Confluence Lab and the UI Sustainability Center, TBD

Climate Change Conversations in Grangeville, Lewiston, and McCall, ID, supported by the Idaho Humanities Council, TBD

LEARN MORE

Visit: <https://www.uidaho.edu/class/english/confluence>

Watch: "Understanding Wilderness: The Confluence Lab," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPAUYjbRSGY&feature=emb_logo

Listen: Teresa Cavazos Cohn, "Combining Science and Arts," the Vandal Theory Podcast, Season 3, Episode 3, <https://www.uidaho.edu/news/the-vandal-theory>

Join our listserv: confluence@uidaho.edu