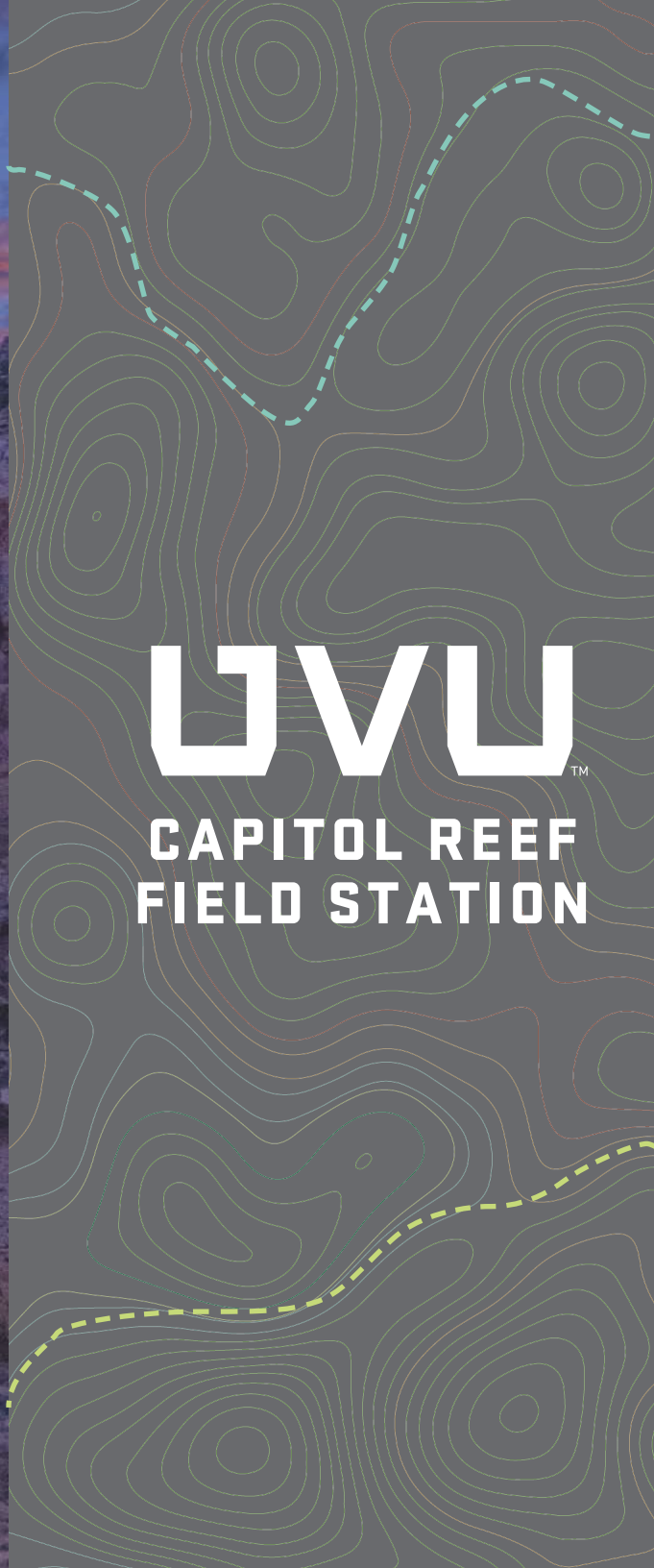




2024-2025
ANNUAL
REPORT



UVUTM
CAPITOL REEF
FIELD STATION

CRFS STAFF

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DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

Capitol Reef Field Station (CRFS) is a center for place-based learning where people from a wide variety of disciplines can link their curriculum and scholarly activities to a particular real-world location. Our location is inside Capitol Reef National Park, and our place for learning includes the entire Colorado Plateau.

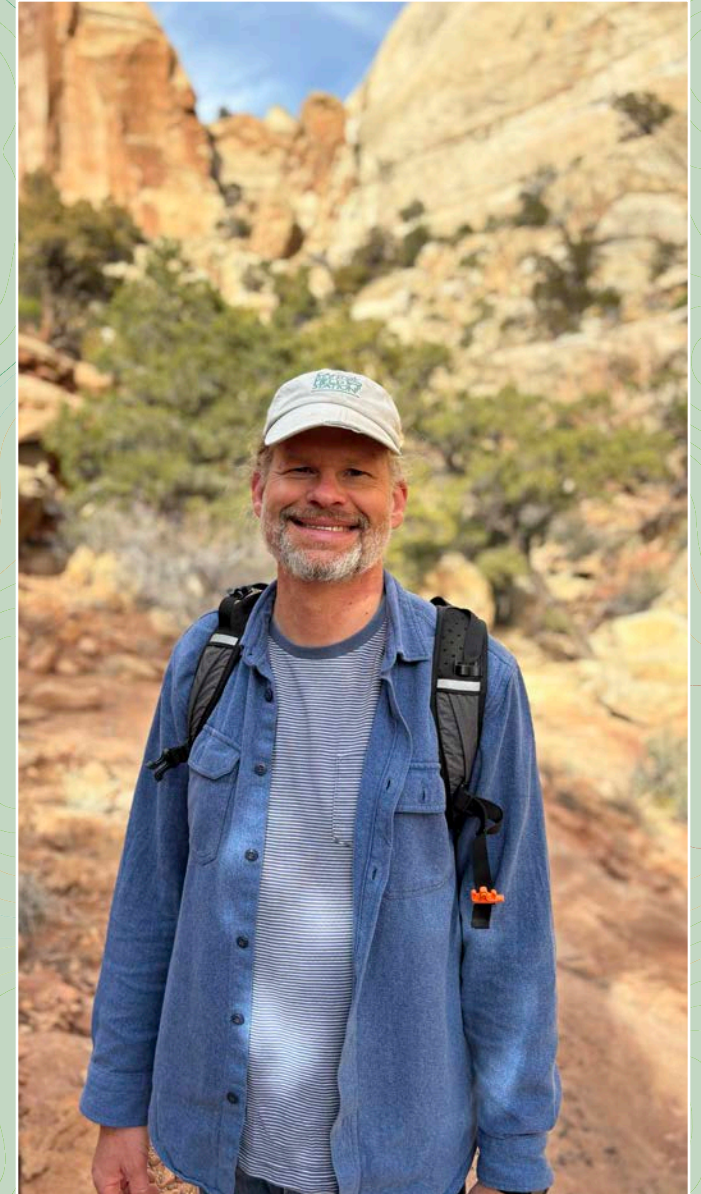
In line with the mission of Utah Valley University (UVU), CRFS focuses on place-based learning to promote student success. Place-based learning is characterized by being relevant, engaging, and hands-on. It provides opportunities for critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. In short, it prepares students for the workforce and a life full of learning.

This year, we've focused on student success through the following four student-centered activities. First, we partnered with the First-Generation Student Success Center to sponsor a weekend workshop at the field station for freshmen and sophomores who are first-gen students. The workshop allowed us to connect with students early in their time at UVU and resulted in measurably better academic outcomes for their cohort. Second, CRFS staff gave a presentation to a large group of students during UVU's Ethics Awareness Week, teaching them about environmental ethics and Leave-No-Trace principles. The students won prizes if they correctly guessed how many gallons of water are used and pounds of trash are generated daily by a typical American. Third, UVU students were actively involved in mentored research and creative work occurring at the field station. They explored insect biodiversity and developed a scaled model of the solar system. Fourth, we hired UVU students as full-time summer interns working in Capitol Reef National Park in the areas of cultural resources, natural resources, and interpretation.

In this annual report, you can read more about our efforts to foster student success through place-based learning. With the support of park staff and faculty from a variety of disciplines, CRFS facilitates meaningful connections between students and our amazing location.



Michael T. Stevens, Ph.D.
Director, Capitol Reef Field Station



ABOUT CRFS

OUR MISSION

Capitol Reef Field Station, in partnership with Capitol Reef National Park, promotes and supports engaged learning, environmental ethics, and research and creative work through the exploration of the Colorado Plateau.

CAPITOL
REEF
FIELD
STATION
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY



OUR VISION

We want our visitors to leave the field station having learned more than the content of their coursework. Far away from many of life's daily distractions, visitors are able to immerse themselves in educational experiences that are enriched by the natural world surrounding them. Practicing conservation encourages all visitors to think about their role in the environment and deepen their understanding of environmental ethics. We hope that every visitor connects to the landscape and develops an appreciation for the natural and cultural legacies of the Colorado Plateau.

OUR PLACE

Beyond the paved roads, our buildings sit atop a mesa in Pleasant Creek Valley in the heart of Capitol Reef National Park. The field station is surrounded by stunning views of canyon country. The sun rises over the Henry Mountains, the last mountain range in the continental United States to be mapped, and sets over Boulder Mountain, which was an active volcano tens of millions of years ago and supported glaciers during the last ice age. At night, casual stargazers and serious astronomers alike can see the Milky Way and abundant constellations against an internationally-recognized dark sky. Only 3.5 hours from the main campus of UVU in Orem, Utah, our incredible location provides an unparalleled opportunity for place-based learning.

OUR PARTNERSHIP

The success of CRFS is only possible because of the strong partnership between UVU and Capitol Reef National Park. Only ten other university-operated field stations are located inside U.S. national parks. Our uncommon partnership allows CRFS to provide its visitors with educational experiences that are as remarkable as the landscape in which they occur. CRFS is property of the National Park Service (NPS) and is operated by UVU in accordance with our 10-year general agreement with Capitol Reef National Park.



VISITATION SUMMARY

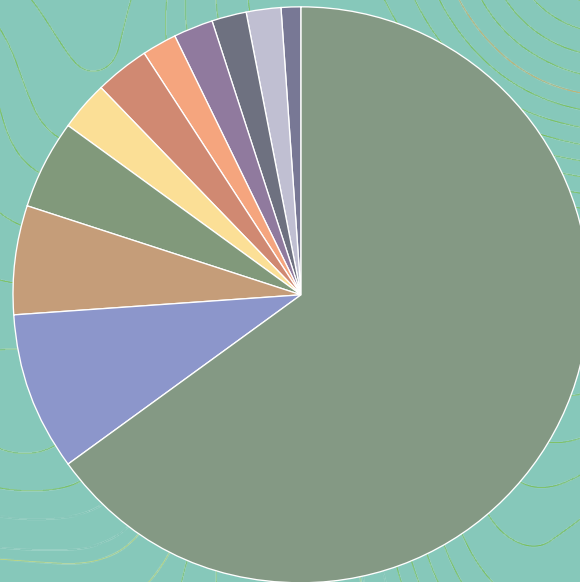
Our total number of user days was 3,132 this year, which was **our busiest year ever!** User days are calculated by multiplying the number of visitors by the number of calendar days they spent at the station.

Sixty-five percent of our user days were associated with UVU this year. University of Kansas and Westminster University were other leading sources of visitation (Fig. 1).

Visitors from UVU represented five different colleges and schools including the College of Science, the School of the Arts, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Health and Public Service, and the Woodbury School of Business (Fig. 2). This is strong evidence that a field-station experience is relevant to a wide variety of academic disciplines. In addition to hosting credit-bearing courses, we engage with the broader community by providing a venue for Continuing Education classes, which represented 16% of our user days this year.

During the 2024-25 fiscal year, 837 people (including 380 undergraduates) visited CRFS in 53 groups. The average group size was 16 and the average stay per group was 4 days.

Fig. 1 Percentages of CRFS user days from various institutions.



Utah Valley University	65%
University of Kansas	9%
Westminster University	6%
Summit High School	5%
Wasatch High School	3%
University of Utah	3%
Wilderness Individual Leadership Development	2%
Weber State University	2%
Utah State University	2%
Nebo School District	2%
Brigham Young University	1%

Fig. 2 Percentages of CRFS user days from UVU's colleges, programs, or schools.



College of Science	23%
School of the Arts	18%
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	17%
Continuing Education	16%
Student Affairs	11%
Honors	6%
College of Health & Public Service	4%
Woodbury School of Business	3%
Innovation Academy	2%

VISITATION SUMMARY



UVU CLASSES WHO VISITED CRFS		
COLLEGE/PROGRAM/SCHOOL	COURSE	TITLE
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	ANTH 3260	Archaeology Methods and Theory
	COMM 3115	Communicating in Environments (Fall)
		Communicating in Environments (Spring)
	COMM 3520	Public Relations & Strategic Communication Case Studies
	COMM 3500R	Public Relations Travel & Tourism
College of Science	SPAN 3030	Spanish Conversation & Composition
	BOT 2100	Utah Flora
	ENVT 3770	Environmental Management
	GEO 2020R	Science Excursion
	GEOG 1300G/2000	Survey of World Geography/Sustainability & Environment
Honors	MATH 1035	Quantitative Reasoning with Integrative Algebra
	HONR 1000R	Honors Colloquium (Fall)
School of the Arts		Honors Colloquium (Spring)
	ART 3000R	Art & Design Photography
	ART 4430R	Design Studio

UVU GROUPS WHO VISITED CRFS	
AFFILIATION	GROUP
College of Health & Public Service	Community Health Outreach Clinics
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	Creative Writing Workshop
College of Science	Friends of the Pleistocene
	Nature to the Classroom (Fall)
	Nature to the Classroom (Spring)
Continuing Education	Mindfulness & Meditation
	Oil Painting
	Watercolor
	Writers' Weekend (Fall)
	Writers' Weekend (Spring)
Innovation Academy	CRFS Faculty Workshop
	CRFS Staff/Park Leadership Meeting
Student Affairs	First-Gen Workshop
	First-Year Orientation
	Outdoor Adventure Center Trip Leader Training
Woodbury School of Business	UVU Club Ambassadors
	International Student Council

CLASSES FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES WHO VISITED CRFS	
UNIVERSITY	CLASS
Brigham Young University	Special Topics in Field Geology
University of Kansas	Geology Field Camp
University of Utah	Astronomy
	Environmental Human Field Study
Utah State University	Utah Conservation Corps
Weber State University	Field Trip in Rock Art
Westminster University	Expedition
	Outdoor Education & Leadership Field Semester
	Self Love

OTHER GROUPS WHO VISITED CRFS	
GROUP	EVENT
Nebo School District	Title IV
Summit High School	Capitol Reef Curriculum Class (Fall)
	Capitol Reef Curriculum Class (Spring)
	Capitol Reef Curriculum Class (Summer)
Wasatch High School	Wasatch Alternative (Fall)
	Wasatch Alternative (Spring)
Wilderness Individual Leadership Development	City Neighbors
	Girls' Empowerment Mission
	Next One Up

RESEARCH GROUPS WHO VISITED CRFS	
AFFILIATION	PROJECT
Utah Valley University	Scaled Solar System

ENGAGED LEARNING

Our mission statement begins with a declaration of our commitment to engaged learning. That was true when we opened in 2008 and remains true today. As an exceptional location for place-based learning, we host visitors from a wide variety of disciplines looking for an engaged-learning experience that is difficult to replicate anywhere else. Though it takes some time and effort to visit the field station, visitors are well-rewarded for that effort. This past year, 93% of our visitors strongly agreed (77%) or agreed (16%) that the field-station experience was distinctive (Fig. 3).

This year, 97% of our visitors strongly agreed (84%) or agreed (13%) that their educational experience was enhanced by their field station visit (Fig. 4). In addition, 99% of our visitors strongly agreed (89%) or agreed (10%) that they would encourage others to visit the field station (n = 543). Please take a few minutes to learn about some of our visitors this year.

Fig. 3 The vast majority of our visitors strongly agreed that the environment at the field station is difficult to replicate on campus (n = 545).



Fig. 4 The vast majority of our visitors strongly agreed that their educational experience was enhanced by their visit to the field station (n = 545).



UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
Natural Resources Management (ENVT 3770)
October 25-28, 2024

UVU's Dr. Tara Bishop took her ENVT 3770 students on an experiential-learning trip, which provided hands-on training in resource management and facilitated deep connections to the landscape and to each other. Students participated in a petroglyph hike, a service project removing invasive plants, stargazing under dark skies, and field-method training for vegetation management and assessment. Additionally, students learned about sustainability, conservation, resource management, and Leave-No-Trace principles. The trip was very meaningful, with student Karson Green commenting:

"I have been to many national parks and experienced raw and untouched places before, but this was so special to get down and dirty with the landscape! I learned it's not just making maps and monitoring from images but getting hands-on and involving many different people."

Dr. Bishop described the trip impact as follows:

"The experience profoundly impacted students' understanding of natural resources management as both a scientific and deeply human endeavor. ... Through this field experience, students gained practical skills in field protocols, invasive-species management, and resource monitoring while developing the listening and communication skills essential for collaborative conservation work. The trip successfully bridged classroom theory with real-world practice, preparing students to think and act as future natural-resource managers."



ENGAGED LEARNING



WESTMINSTER UNIVERSITY

Outdoor Education & Leadership Field Semester

November 4-8, 2024

Students in the Westminster Outdoor Education and Leadership Field Semester spend weeks engaged in immersive outdoor activities including backpacking, river running, canyoneering, and rock climbing. They participate in skill building throughout, including an emphasis on educational and leadership skills, environmental ethics, interpersonal development, and land management. Their visit to CRFS is the concluding activity of the semester, which gives them time to debrief, reflect, exchange feedback, and process their incredible experience. AJ Verkouw, program chair and instructor, relates:

“CRFS is the perfect place for us to wrap up our semester. Since these students have spent approximately 50 days in southern Utah, and have developed a connection to it, CRFS allows us to process the experience in that place. It offers the perfect transition environment from full backcountry living to the luxuries of home, and helps ease that transition. It provides excellent facilities that support us in effectively delivering our final pieces of curriculum and celebrating the students’ accomplishments. It inspires our reflection through its beauty. It drives home the power of connection to place and intentional interaction with our environments that we strive to instill in them.”

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
First-Generation Student Workshop
February 21-23, 2025

UVU's First-Generation Student Success Center took their inaugural trip to the field station this year. Program Director Colton Simons describes the trip and its effect on the students:

"In February 2025 we took a group of 20 first-generation college students to UVU's Capitol Reef Field Station for a weekend of programming. Students were selected from the broader UVU population, focusing on students in their first or second year at UVU who were

showing moderate engagement with their major and the university. Over the course of this weekend, students participated in workshops on crucial communication, conservation, cooking on a college budget, yoga and mindful movement/meditation, and, of course, the beauty of the national park. One of the greatest untaught lessons of the trip was that of impact—students walked away with a greater understanding of how one person can make a difference for generations to come. This lesson was taught in terms of environmental impact, a star party, and viewing petroglyph panels and other meaningful spaces in the park.

"Our goal with these students was to help them further engage on campus and with the First-Generation Student Success Center. In Fall 2025, all students re-enrolled and have demonstrated higher persistence metrics than in previous years (e.g., Canvas engagement, improved grades, and an increase in the number of credits they are taking). Three of the five students who were exploring majors have selected a program and are demonstrating success in their courses. Above all, 100% of the students who participated have accessed the resources in the First-Gen Center multiple times this academic year. This was a thoroughly enjoyable and meaningful trip, and we hope to do many more in the years to come!"



ENGAGED LEARNING

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
Public Relations & Strategic Communication
Case Studies (COMM 3520)
April 2-5, 2025

UVU COMM 3520 students traveled to the field station with faculty member Farah Sanders as part of their course in which they prepared case studies about sustainability and conservation at the field station and Capitol Reef National Park. Students hiked, volunteered in a park orchard, and learned all about sustainability from CRFS Site Manager Cinimin Kofford. Ellie Widdison, a UVU undergraduate in the course, included the following in her case study:

“The station offers an immersive experience, allowing visitors to learn about and interact with the surrounding ecosystems. Its self-sustaining design significantly minimizes environmental impact. ... Capitol Reef Field Station is an impressive example of effectively implementing sustainability and conservation practices. With Cinimin’s guidance, guests engage in this ongoing work, helping reduce human environmental impact within Capitol Reef.”



ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

With all too frequent reminders of climate change around us, we remain highly committed to our mission of environmental ethics. Not only do we pursue sustainability in our operations, but we also work to educate our visitors about the importance of conservation and environmental ethics. We measure and inform our guests about their water usage and trash production during their visits. We also strive to educate them about strategies to reduce their environmental footprint long after they return home. We hope that they leave the field station with different attitudes and practices than when they arrived.

We are confident our efforts are having an impact, as this year, 94% of our visitors reported learning new methods to reduce their personal environmental impact at home (n = 540). In addition, 94% strongly agreed (79%) or agreed (15%) that staying at CRFS made them more aware of their personal environmental impact (Fig. 5). Not only do our visitors leave with a greater appreciation of the environment in general, but they also leave with a stronger appreciation for public lands, with 94% strongly agreeing (80%) or agreeing (14%) that as a result of their stay, they place more value on protected public lands such as Capitol Reef National Park (Fig. 6).

Fig. 5 The vast majority of our visitors strongly agreed that staying at CRFS made them more aware of their personal environmental impact (n = 542).



Fig. 6 The vast majority of our visitors strongly agreed that they place more value on protected public lands, such as Capitol Reef National Park, because of their stay at CRFS (n = 542).



RESEARCH & CREATIVE WORK

We funded two research and creative-work projects at the field station this year that focused on things as small as insects or as large as solar systems. These projects have resulted in two presentations involving two UVU professors and three UVU undergraduates.

BLOW FLY BIODIVERSITY

In March 2025, Dr. Carl Hjelman received a grant from CRFS for his research proposal entitled “Carrion Cartographers: Mapping Blow Fly Species Across the Colorado Plateau.” The goal of this proposed work is to measure and assess blow fly biodiversity in southern Utah. Dr. Hjelman, an assistant professor in UVU’s Department of Biology, summarizes his research:

“There is a paucity of information on blow fly species distribution and composition in the mountain west, with only one primary research article mentioning blow flies in the state, and no modern works investigating their distributions. The distinct lack of urbanization in this southern region, in conjunction with the conservation of this region, can allow us to assess the baseline composition of these species across the plateau for comparison with neighboring, and more urban regions (Arizona, northern Utah, etc.). This information will provide essential insights on decomposition ecology in these desert regions and has far-reaching implications in developing and improving wildlife and medico-legal forensics in the mountain west.”

A SCALED SOLAR SYSTEM MODEL

Keith White, a professor in UVU’s Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning Department, received a grant from CRFS to develop a scaled solar system model for display at the field station. Keith hired two students for this project. Samuel Baird created accurately-sized physical models of the sun and eight planets at a scale of 1:1 billion. Abigail Matteson hand-painted the models to resemble the planets and the sun. The students were able to present the project at UVU’s Showcase of Undergraduate Scholarly and Creative Works where it was awarded third place in the Visual Arts category. Keith describes the intent of the project:

“Our solar system is almost unimaginably vast, and a physical representation of the size/scale of our system is likely to help visitors increase their appreciation for our planet, and the extreme difficulty associated with going anywhere else. It is my hope that virtually everyone will better realize there is no Planet B, and work to protect and care for the one we have.”

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Beck H[^], Weidner LM, Hjelman CE (2025) Blow fly biodiversity and ecological roles in Utah’s diverse landscapes. Pacific Branch of the Entomological Society of America Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT.

Kofford HC, Stevens MT (2024) Teaching sustainability: environmental ethics at Capitol Reef Field Station. Ethics Awareness Week. Utah Valley University, Orem, UT.

Matteson A[^], Baird S[^], White K (2025) Scaled solar system model. UVU Showcase of Undergraduate Scholarly and Creative Works, Orem, UT.

[^]denotes a UVU undergraduate



CONSTELLATION CHRONICLE

CRFS is surrounded by some of the darkest skies in the country and is designated as a Gold-Tier International Dark-Sky Park. These skies are not only breathtaking in their beauty but also deeply meaningful. They allow us to see the universe as people have for millennia—filled with light, story, and wonder. For as long as humans have looked up, we've traced patterns in the stars, using them to navigate, to tell stories, and to connect our lives to the vastness of the cosmos.

One of the most recognizable constellations in the summer and fall is Cygnus, the Swan. Cygnus soars high through the band of the Milky Way, stretching its wings wide across the heavens. Its shape forms a great cross in the sky, sometimes called the Northern Cross. At the top lies Deneb, one of the brightest stars in the night sky and a key point of the Summer Triangle. At the center, the swan's wings stretch across the galactic river, and at the bottom shines Albireo, a beautiful double star marking the swan's head. Together, these stars form a constellation both striking to the eye and rich in story.

Across cultures, Cygnus has inspired tales of loyalty and transformation. Greek mythology tells of Cygnus and his friend Phaeton, and how Cygnus challenged Phaeton to a chariot race to humble his reckless boasting. Their contest grew fierce as they soared too close to the sun, and both fell to earth when their chariots burst into flames. Grief-stricken, Cygnus searched for Phaeton and found his body trapped in a river. Out of compassion, Zeus transformed Cygnus into a swan so he could retrieve his friend, then placed him among the stars—a lasting symbol of devotion and humility.

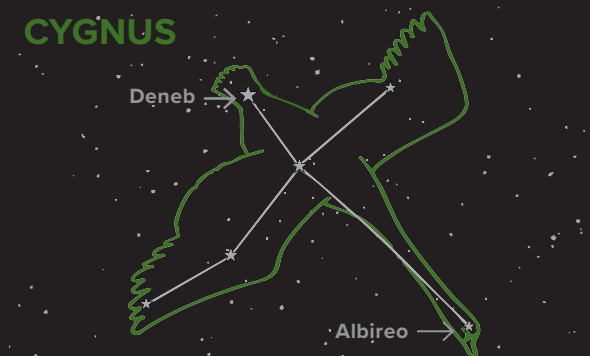
Indigenous peoples saw these same stars differently. The Shoshone, whose ancestors lived in the region that is now Capitol Reef, tell the story of Wakinu the Grizzly Bear. After quarrelling with Wakini the Black Bear, Wakinu was exiled from his valley. Filled with sorrow and longing, he climbed into the mountains, snow piling on his back as he ascended. Eventually, he climbed so high that he vanished into the heavens, leaving behind a glowing trail of snow—the Milky Way—guiding the living toward the next world. For the Shoshone, Cygnus does not represent a swan but Wakinu himself, forever walking his celestial path and guiding his people to the final hunting grounds in the sky.

Astronomically, Cygnus is a treasure trove. Deneb, its brightest star, is a blue-white supergiant nearly 200 times larger than our sun and one of the most luminous stars visible from Earth. Near Deneb lies the North America Nebula, a cloud of gas and dust where new stars are forming. Cygnus also contains one of the first black holes ever discovered, Cygnus X-1. At the swan's head, Albireo dazzles stargazers as a visual double star about 400 light-years away. To the naked eye, it appears as a single point of light, but through a telescope, it splits into two—one blue and one golden. Their contrasting colors reflect their temperatures: like a campfire's flame, the blue star burns much hotter than its golden companion.

Cygnus also plays a vital role in the broader architecture of the night sky. It forms part of the Summer Triangle, alongside Vega in the constellation Lyra and Altair in Aquila. This bright asterism helps orient stargazers to the Milky Way, the glowing river of stars that is our own galaxy seen edge-on. Through Cygnus, we peer deep into that galactic river, toward dense star clouds and regions of ongoing star birth.

To stand beneath a dark sky and watch Cygnus rise overhead is to connect with thousands of years of human imagination and with the living universe itself. Whether you see a swan soaring through the heavens, a bear on his eternal path, or simply a scattering of stars, Cygnus invites us to pause, look up, and remember our place in a much larger story.

Protecting our dark skies ensures that Cygnus—and all the constellations—remain visible for generations to come. By keeping our nights free of light pollution, we preserve the chance for everyone to trace the swan's wings across the Milky Way, to hear the old stories, and to create new ones of our own.



OUTREACH & SERVICE



WASATCH HIGH SCHOOL

September 16-19, 2024

While CRFS primarily serves undergraduate students, we also host high school groups. For example, Wasatch High School in Heber brought students for a three-night stay in September, taking advantage of the tours and programming we offer alongside their own activities. This group also volunteered for a service project, clearing an irrigation ditch in the Fruita orchards. Wasatch teacher Dr. Lafe Conner talks about the value of this service learning:

“The students really benefitted from the experience of working hard at something of value to the earth. They got to feel the soil and see how water moves in the landscape. They also found a snake and interacted with many other visitors to the park. It was exciting that people would stop and ask the students about themselves and about the work they were doing. Many people expressed gratitude, and it was great for the students to have these strangers from all over saying, ‘Thank you!’ As we left the park, one student commented to me how good it felt that she had done something to help this place—a very satisfying accomplishment.”



OUTREACH & SERVICE

SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

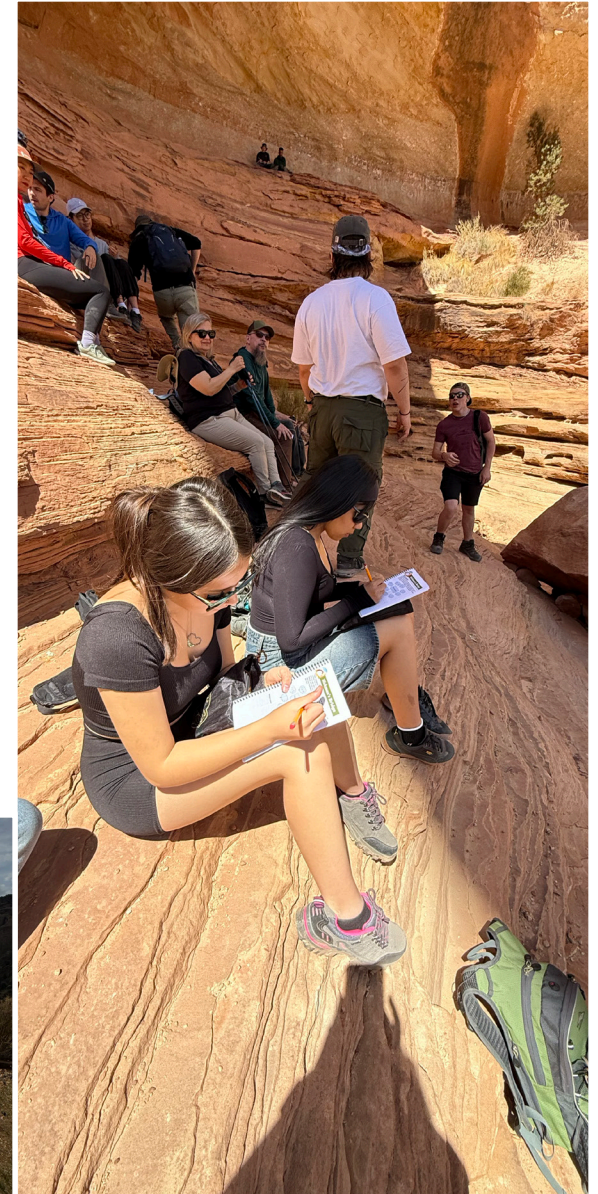
September 30-October 3, 2024
& April 14-17, 2025

Summit High School visited the field station twice last year. Russ McKell, a long-time teacher at Summit High School, describes his unique school, the resilient students, and their memorable spring trip to CRFS:

“In Spring 2025, we brought thirteen students and four staff members from Summit High School to CRFS for a four-day immersive learning experience. Summit is a small alternative high school serving just under 100 students, nearly all of whom are considered ‘at risk’ or are youth in custody. Because of their lived experiences, our program places relationships first—then academics. CRFS offers the rare combination of a supportive environment and the restorative power of nature, making it an ideal space for our students to engage meaningfully with both each other and the curriculum.”

“A particularly powerful learning moment occurred while discussing a juniper tree on the petroglyph walk. Students learned how juniper trees self-prune, allowing certain limbs to die so the entire organism can survive in harsh conditions. The metaphor did not go unnoticed. Several students made direct connections to their own lives—acknowledging that letting go of harmful relationships, habits, or environments can be necessary for their future growth. That quiet reflection in nature created the kind of insight we rarely get in a traditional classroom setting.”

“We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership with CRFS and the opportunity it provides our students. These trips remind them—and us—that education does not have to be confined to walls, and that growth often requires leaving familiar landscapes behind.”



CRFS INTERNSHIPS



CULTURAL RESOURCES INTERN

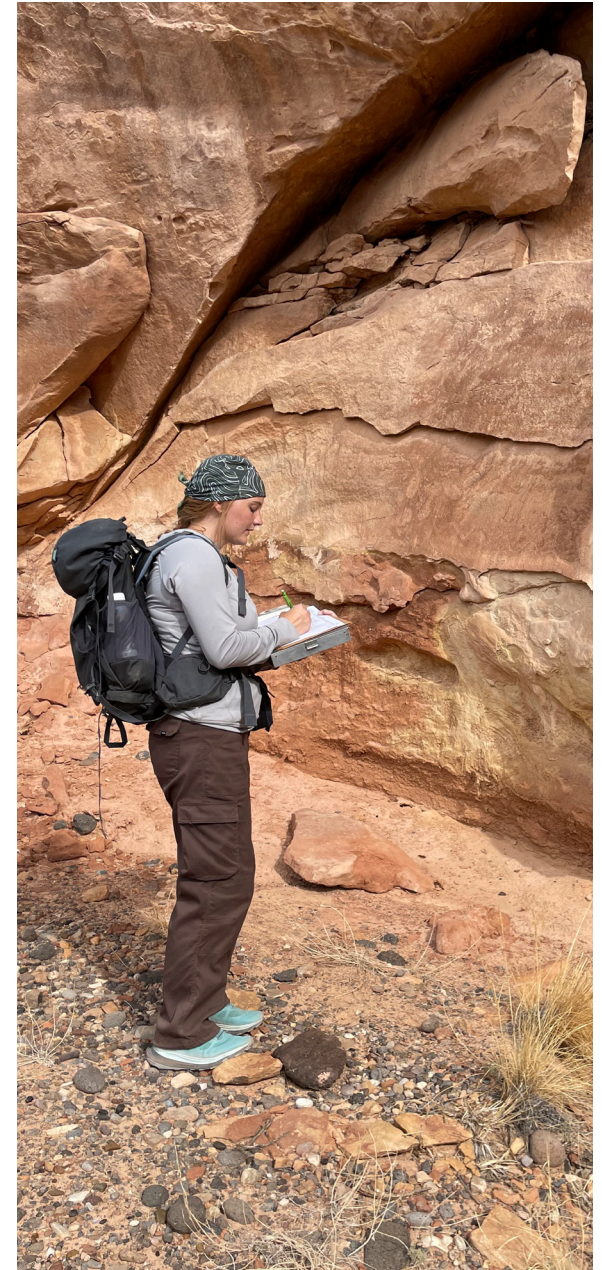
Jocelyn Young

Major: Anthropology

Immersed in Capitol Reef National Park’s rich history, Jocelyn Young spent her summer internship working in the Cultural Resources program, gaining hands-on experience in archaeology and historic preservation. She spent the summer assessing and documenting archaeological sites, conducting visitor surveys, and surveying sites to ensure accurate preservation of the park’s cultural heritage. Jocelyn also documented changes to historic structures, providing critical records for ongoing preservation efforts.

This internship allowed Jocelyn to combine fieldwork with research and office-based data processing, giving her a full perspective on the work involved in protecting cultural resources. She discovered a passion for archaeology and learned how it can be both research-driven and people-facing, through preservation work and public education. Jocelyn’s experience confirmed her interest in pursuing a career that blends archaeology with public engagement, leaving her with valuable skills and lasting memories of Capitol Reef’s unique landscapes and history. Jocelyn shares:

“This internship has taught me more about archaeology work than I could have ever asked for. I have loved getting to be out in the field documenting archaeology and have equally loved being in the office researching and processing information. ... Through this internship I have discovered a love for archaeology and for preserving and documenting the pieces those of the past have left behind. It has helped me decide to pursue a career/higher education with a focus on archaeology.”





Exploring Capitol Reef National Park from the perspective of a park ranger, Millie Knowlton spent her summer internship gaining hands-on experience in interpretation, education, and daily park operations. She worked at the visitor center, hosted groups at CRFS, and developed public programs on geology and archaeology. Leading guided hikes and stargazing programs gave her the chance to share the park's incredible landscapes and stories while deepening her own understanding of the area.

Beyond interpretation, Millie shadowed professionals across many park programs, including cultural resources, law enforcement, and natural resources. Living and working in the remote beauty of Capitol Reef fostered a strong sense of community and confirmed her love for connecting people with the outdoors. The experience strengthened her confidence in her geology degree and inspired a clear career goal—to become an interpretation ranger with the NPS. Millie elaborates:

"I have really enjoyed my internship and everything I have learned from being in Capitol Reef National Park. I would really love to someday work for the park service and be an interpretation ranger. I am really grateful for this opportunity to learn about the unique geology, ecology, and history of Capitol Reef National Park."



INTERPRETATION INTERN

Millie Knowlton

Major: Geology

CRFS INTERNSHIPS



NATURAL RESOURCES INTERN

Adam Memmott

Major: Environmental Science & Management

From riparian oases to the rugged backcountry, Adam Memmott's summer internship at Capitol Reef National Park gave him hands-on experience managing and protecting the park's natural resources. His work took him deep into remote terrain, monitoring threatened species like the Mexican spotted owl and rare endemic cacti. Adam also contributed to long-term studies on cattle impacts in riparian areas and assisted with invasive-species management—challenging but essential work that supports the park's ecological integrity.

In addition to field research, Adam helped operate CRFS, providing educational opportunities for visitors while gaining insight into park management and operations. His internship offered a rare look into the realities of natural-resource work on public lands, from long days in the field to navigating federal policies. The experience strengthened his appreciation for park management and reinforced his commitment to a career in conserving and protecting public lands. Adam explains:

"I found my internship at the park to be informative, rewarding, and meaningful in both my personal and professional lives. It allowed me to expand my skills: from desert travel to field work, and from search and rescue to behind-the-scenes data processing and management. This internship gave me opportunities to see and experience the park in ways that I might never have experienced on my own. It showed me how parks are run, and some of the barriers they face. It gave me the amazing opportunity to work and even run the field station in Capitol Reef. It gave me the opportunity to build connections. It reinforced for me that national parks aren't all stunning vistas and scenic drives, but places where difficult and critical work is being done while navigating a constantly-changing natural landscape and political environment, all to protect our public lands."

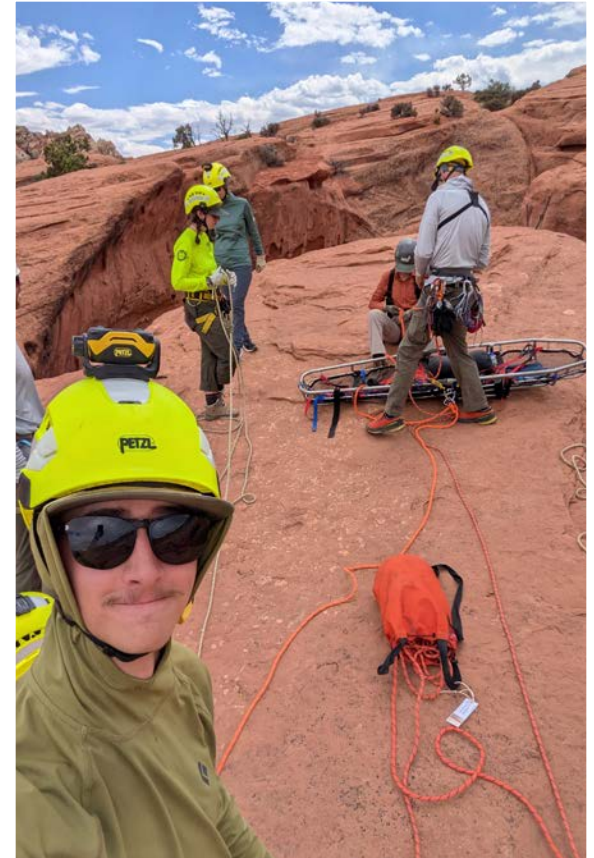
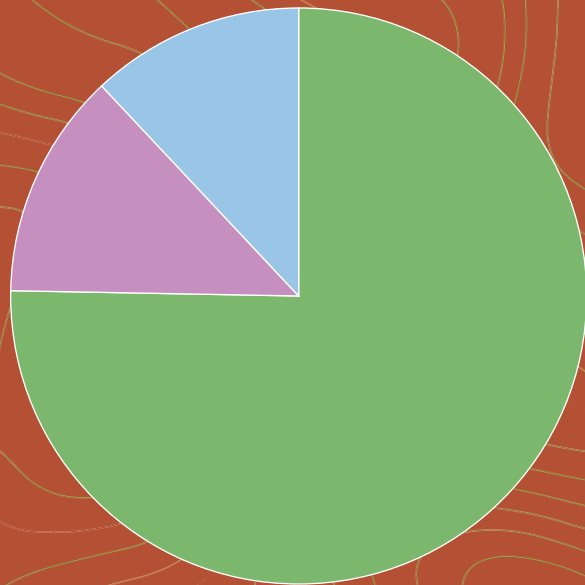
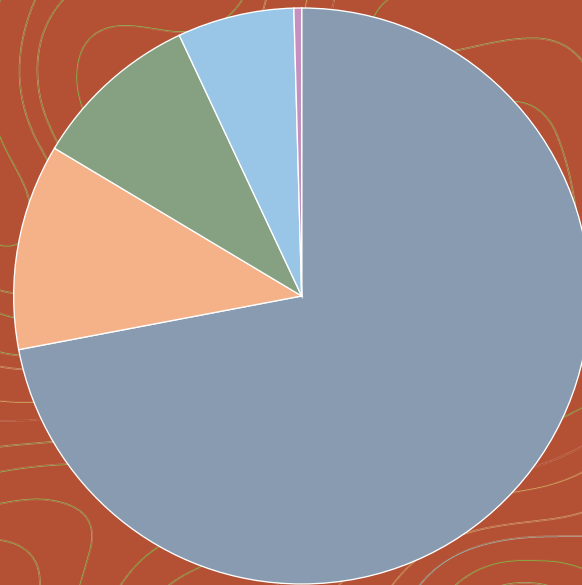


Fig. 7 Funding for CRFS by source.



■ Institutional Support 75%
■ User Fees & Product Sales 13%
■ Private Donations 12%

Fig. 8 CRFS outlays by category.



■ Salaries & Benefits 72%
■ Operations & Maintenance 12%
■ Student Internships 9%
■ Marketing & Outreach 7%
■ Research & Creative Work < 1%

This year, the operating funds at CRFS came from three sources: 1) institutional support from UVU (\$241,733.66), 2) funds generated by user fees and product sales (\$40,826.63), and 3) private donations (\$38,493.00) (Fig. 7).

This funding supported the salaries and benefits of the staff (\$232,533.00), operations and maintenance (\$37,320.61), student internships (\$30,481.72), marketing and outreach (\$21,151.36), and research and creative work (\$1,398.80) (Fig. 8).

While UVU generously supports the station, CRFS relies on private donations to pay for new building projects and important programs such as student internships and research and creative work. We are currently seeking donations for an education-focused observatory and a site manager's residence.

If you value our mission, please make a donation at: www.uvu.edu/crfs/support.html. Contact Dan Dimond at ddimond@uvu.edu or (801) 863-5112 with questions about making a donation.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Our strategic plan has five essential elements. The first three are linked to our mission of engaged learning, environmental ethics, and research and creative work. The last two elements are tied to building partnerships and meeting our visitors' needs.

1o Promote CRFS as a place for engaged learning used by a variety of disciplines and multiple institutions.

In February 2025, CRFS staff and the steering committee partnered with Colton Simons in the First-Generation Student Success Center to organize and host a weekend workshop for freshman and sophomore first-generation UVU students. The workshop was fun and educational and included topics such as stress management techniques, improving social connections, gaining perspective, the uniqueness of the Colorado Plateau and field station, and eating healthily on a college budget. The presenters included Dr. Maria Blevins, Jessamy Bowie, Cinimin Kofford, and Colton Simons.

2o Develop environmental awareness and engage visitors in sustainable practices to be applied at home.

Cinimin Kofford and Dr. Michael Stevens co-presented "Teaching Sustainability: Environmental Ethics at Capitol Reef Field Station" as part of UVU's Ethics Awareness Week in September 2024. Cinimin's presentation focused on Leave-No-Trace principles and Michael's presentation highlighted opportunities for learning about conservation at the field station. Part of the interactive presentation included a Price Is Right game where audience members had to guess (without going over) the number of gallons of water that a typical American uses in a day and the pounds of trash they produce.

STRATEGIC PLAN

3 Foster research and creative work that utilizes CRFS as a venue from which to explore the Colorado Plateau.

Dr. Michael Stevens worked with Shelly Andrus in the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Works (URCW) to elevate the presence of CRFS grant opportunities on the URCW webpage. Our hope is that this linkage will help increase the number of CRFS grant applications in the future. This year, research and creative work at the field station included a study of blow flies by Dr. Carl Hjelman and a scaled solar system project under the direction of Keith White.

4 Continue to collaborate with our NPS field-station partners and build relationships with other relevant organizations.

CRFS staff and park leadership met at the field station on February 2, 2025. At the meeting, we discussed our field-station partnership, upcoming events, facilities, fundraising, marketing, and

research and creative work. After the meeting we had lunch together and discussed the footprint and architectural plans for the site manager's residence as well as the approval process for both the residence and the observatory.

To build relationships with other relevant organizations, Dr. Michael Stevens attended the Organization of Biological Field Stations meeting in South Carolina in November 2024 where he networked with other field-station professionals and was invited to participate in the National Parks Institute, which he attended in April 2025. The National Parks Institute is an annual invitation-only executive leadership seminar offered by University of California Merced's Gallo Management Program. The seminar is designed for professionals in park and protected-area management. This year there were 20 participants from Belize, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Mozambique, Slovakia, Tanzania, and the United States. The seminar included lectures, case studies, field trips, and facilitated exercises that explored the integration of law, science, and policy in the context of land management.

5 Ensure that CRFS facilities, staffing, and services meet visitor needs.

This year, CRFS staff members have worked diligently to move forward the planning and approval of new facilities at the field station, including a site manager's residence and an education-focused observatory. During this process, we've stayed in close contact with Frank Young (UVU Facilities), Derek Wilson (Range Architecture), and Suzanne Bouchard (Capitol Reef National Park). We're happy to report that our project initiation form has been approved by the park and we're currently working on contracting language before we go out for bids.



SUPPORT CRFS

Capitol Reef Field Station makes a difference—so can you!

Please visit www.uvu.edu/crfs/support.html to contribute. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law, and we will honor your contribution by listing your name in our annual report. Contact Dan Dimond at ddimond@uvu.edu or (801) 863-5112 with questions about making a donation.



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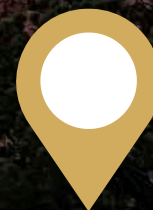
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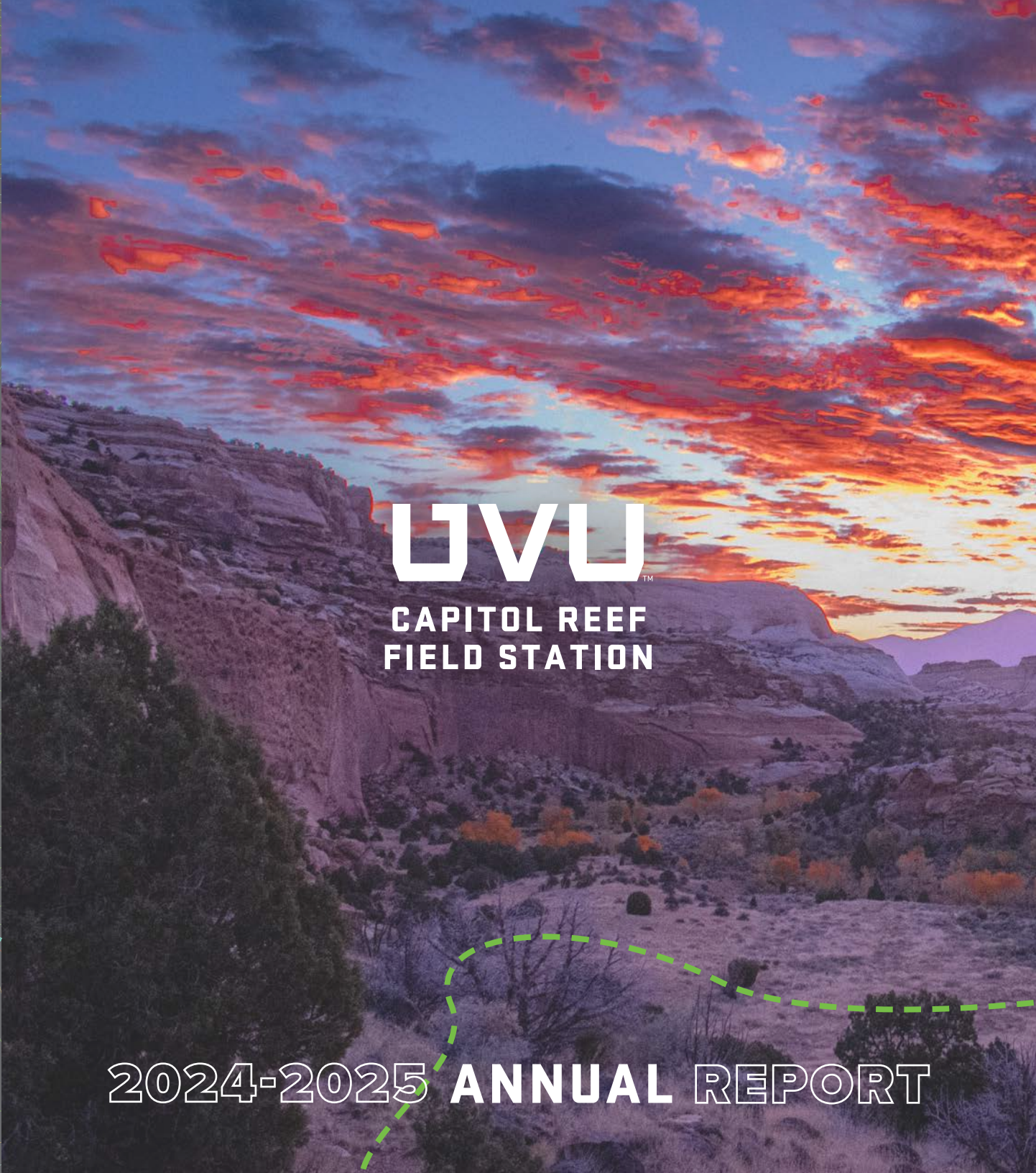
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