16. Strengthening collaboration around wildfire mitigation
Mentors: Libby Christensen, Seth Davis
Location: Routt County

Extension mentors and application contact information
Field agent: Libby Christensen (FCS and 4-H Agent, Colorado State University Extension,
Steamboat Springs, CO; lchristensen@co.routt.co.us)
Campus contact: Seth Davis (Forest & Rangeland Stewardship, Warner College of Natural
Resources, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO; seth.davis@colostate.edu)

In what region(s) will the student be working (county/region/state)? This project will take place
in Routt County in the northwestern region of Colorado.

In less than 150 words, please describe the proposed internship goals, scope, and objectives. The
overall goal of the internship is to provide the student with opportunities to develop their
extension skills with specific emphasis on facilitating interactions between state land
management agencies, CSU extension, local non-profits, municipalities, and communities to
support development of a burgeoning wildfire council. The scope of the work done by the intern
may include facilitation and moderation of planning meetings, implementation and analysis of
survey tools, and inventory or mapping of prioritized project locations. Specific objectives
include: (1) continued development of relationships between CSU Extension and community
stakeholders within the northern Colorado region, (2) acquisition and analysis of objective
datasets that are consistent with identified project goals, and (3) production of analytical products
that extension agents and community partners can use to support programming efforts.

Which PRU activities are included in the scope of this internship? Natural Resources and
Community Development

What student learning outcomes do you anticipate and are there opportunities for professional
development? By the end of the internship the intern develop important skills necessary to: (1)
develop a stakeholder engagement strategy that is appropriate for a diverse set of stakeholders
including private and public land managers, (2) effectively write grants for federal and
community based funders, and (3) manage complex projects relying on primarily volunteer
support.

How does this internship support identified stakeholder needs in your county/region? In 2019,
stakeholders in Routt County established the Routt County Wildfire Mitigation Council. The
council is comprised of a broad group of representatives from county and city government;
federal, state and local agencies; as well as community groups and private individuals. The group
had its first meeting in December 2019 to start defining its charter, mission, and priorities. Over
the next few months, the group has identified chartering a non-profit and applying for the Bureau
of Land Management grant as the top two priorities. Yet, at this point, the Council does not have
dedicated staff. An Extension intern could provide much need capacity, at a particularly difficult
time of year.
What is your experience with mentorship? In less than 100 words, please describe your experience with and approach to mentorship. Both mentor contacts have significant experience training mentees in multiple settings and contexts. Dr. Christensen has worked previously with CSU Internship mentees on analyzing community wildfire protection plans, and Dr. Davis regularly interacts with and oversees progress of undergraduate and graduate students.

Are there on-going connections with CSU faculty associated with this project, or is there identified faculty interest? This project will extend an ongoing collaboration between Christensen and Davis to train interns interested in Extension careers for development of integrated community plans. Previous collaboration supported by this program resulted in a manuscript submission to the Journal of Extension with Extension intern.

Are travel funds available? Opportunities to provide student assistance with housing? Travel within the county and surrounding communities will be covered.