

February 25, 2014

To whom it may concern:

Colorado State University's achievements and innovations in sustainability are guided by its heritage as a land-grant institution. Since the creation of Colorado State as a land-grant university, it has been guided by its three-part mission: education, research and extension. Colorado State was founded as the Colorado Agricultural College in 1870, eight years after the Morrill Act. Since then, our University has been working to expand understanding of our environment and the impact we have upon it.

Colorado State excels in environmental research thanks to its long history in the field. From the early days of hydrology studies done by Elwood Mead and Ralph Parshall's development of the Parshall Flume, Colorado State has made significant contributions to the collective knowledge of environmental issues.

Colorado State's stature as a top research institution in the environmental sciences has been a great asset to our participation in STARS. Colorado State exceeds the high expectations of STARS. Colorado State's leadership in environmental research has grown from early crop testing for performance in high-altitude environments. Today, Colorado State conducts extensive research to advance our collective understanding of key areas such as weather, climate, forestry, air quality, water quality, and natural sciences.

Colorado State's School of Global Environmental Sustainability is an umbrella organization that encompasses all environmental education and research at Colorado State University. The school positions CSU to address the multiple challenges to global sustainability through broad-based research, curricular programs, and outreach initiatives. The school's emphases include food security, environmental institutions and governance, sustainable communities, land and water resources, biodiversity, conservation and management, climate change and energy. The mission of SoGES incorporates a long history of environmental studies that have been part of the University curriculum for decades.

Part of Colorado State's land-grant mission has been to forge partnerships within Colorado communities and beyond by responding with research-backed solutions to environmental events and bring forth better understanding of environmental trends. Recently, Colorado has endured both devastating wildfires and floods. Through Colorado State's expertise in forestry, weather, and entomology, our researchers were able to quantify the impact of a mountain pine beetle infestation and how to best manage our state's forests to be healthy, productive, and have greater resilience to future fire. When Colorado was besieged by floodwaters in September 2013, Colorado State's Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow Network, a community-based volunteer network of trained weather observers, was able to provide real-time, accurate record of precipitation data for the region. This data benefited the meteorologists, emergency managers, insurance adjusters, and homeowners.

The dissemination of knowledge generated by the university has been a primary responsibility of Colorado State Extension since the Smith /Lever Act in 1914. In the spirit of sharing University research with the citizens of this state, Colorado State has both nurtured the seeds of sustainability throughout Colorado and served as an example of how a large entity can mitigate its environmental impact. Colorado State has been among top performers in Recycle Mania, has reused building materials in campus construction projects, adding solar arrays and building facilities to LEED Gold standards to manage energy consumption, and expanded environmental studies programs to prepare learners to be the next generation of environmental researchers.

Colorado State University is proud to serve as a leader in both the research and practice of environmental sustainability. We play a critical role in not just understanding the environment, and teaching new ways that people and organizations can incorporate sustainable environmental practices. Understanding and practice are two critical areas for environmental sustainability, and Colorado State is proud to be part of that conversation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Miranda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "M".

Dr. Rick Miranda  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
Colorado State University