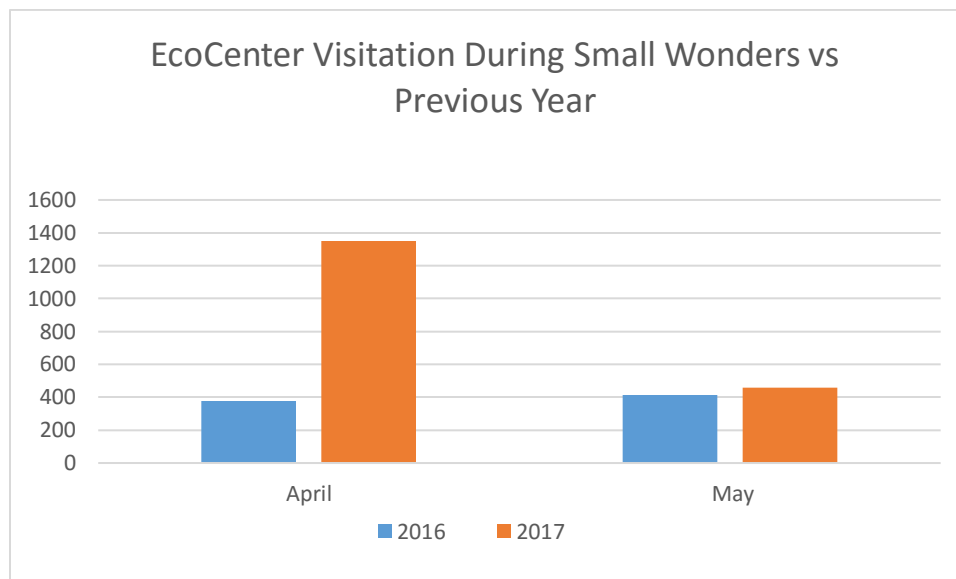
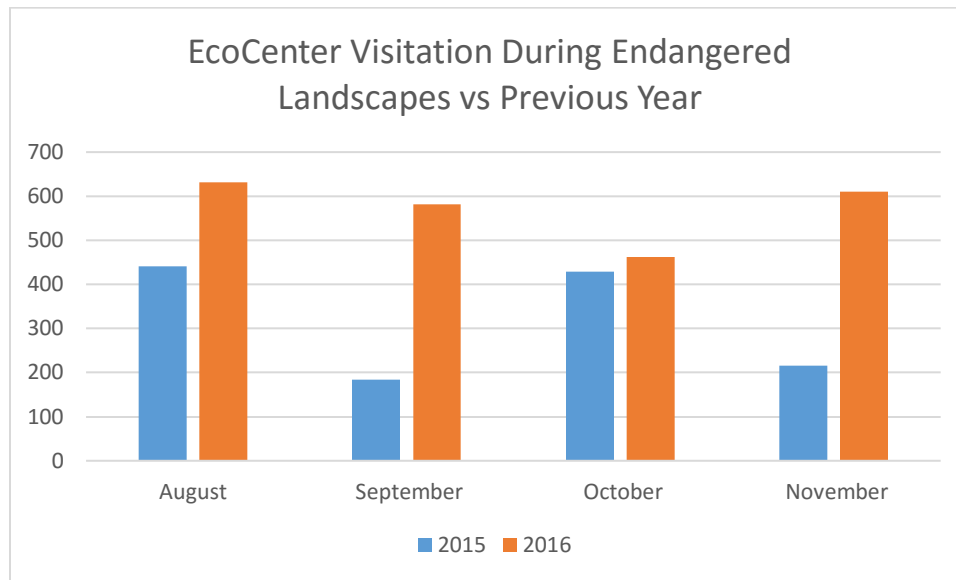


USU Extension Grant – Final Report

2. **Project Leader:** Danielle (Nell) Larson A01496212
3. **Project Title:** Bringing Educational Traveling Exhibits to Swaner EcoCenter
4. **Beginning Date and End Date:** June 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017
5. **Total Requested:** \$10,000
6. **Project Objectives:** The USU Extension Grant enabled Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter to lease, create, and open to the public two traveling exhibitions. The first was called *Endangered Landscapes*, and focused on the future of America’s public lands through a series of images taken by accomplished photographer Rick Braveheart. The strikingly beautiful photographic exhibit highlighted America’s National Parks in honor of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. The exhibit also included informational panels, interactive panels, and antique photography equipment in addition to historic postcards and prints. This core of the exhibit was supplemented by Swaner staff with activities and content designed for youth to make the exhibit fun and educational for all ages. The second exhibit, *Small Wonders: The Expansive World of Insects*, was brought to life through a partnership with Bradford Cole and the USU Libraries. The core of the exhibit was created by USU Libraries in conjunction with the USU Entomology Club, and was supplemented with additional panels, displays, and youth activities. The goal of these exhibits was to engage new and repeat visitors with the Swaner EcoCenter and USU Extension, educate the local and broader communities about important relevant topics, and inspire an interest in learning more about the natural world.
7. **Project Results:** The two traveling exhibitions proved to be quite successful at engaging both current constituents and bringing in first time visitors. During the exhibits, EcoCenter visitor numbers increased significantly over the same month in the previous year, as seen in the charts below.



Our follow-up survey indicated that the majority of respondents had made their visit specifically to see the exhibit. (59% for Endangered Landscapes, 85% for Small Wonders.) It also revealed that many respondents were first time visitors to the EcoCenter. (Endangered Landscapes: 56%, Small Wonders: 30%) Visitors were also asked if they were likely to return to the EcoCenter in the event of another traveling exhibit, and respondents said they were very likely to come back for that reason. (Endangered

Landscapes: 4.4/5, Small Wonders: 4.1/5). Together, these numbers paint a clear picture that exhibits are effective in increasing visitor numbers, bringing in first time visitors, and engaging them.

Visitors also had an excellent time while at the exhibit, rating their experience at a 5.6/6 at the Endangered Landscapes exhibit, and a 5.3/6 at the Small Wonders Exhibit. They found the experience to be educational, with the majority of respondents answering that they “strongly agree” (Endangered Landscapes: 59%, Small Wonders: 59%) or “agree” (Endangered Landscapes: 22%, Small Wonders: 15%) that they learned something new. Perhaps most exciting is that many respondents stated that they were inspired to learn more about the topics covered in the exhibits. (Endangered Landscapes: 81%, Small Wonders: 67%)

This project was effective in forming new partnerships with both USU Libraries and the USU Entomology Club, specifically the Ramirez Lab. We have discussed potential future partnerships with both entities. With the library, this would likely take the form of a future traveling exhibit, and with the Entomology Club and the Ramirez Lab, it could be in the form of programming.

While we have no current plans to publish on this project, we have started to explore the possibility of lending or leasing the exhibit to other small museums in Utah, and currently have one interested site, The Hogle Zoo.

The USU Extension Grant of \$10,000 covered 18% of the total project cost, with the remaining \$45,000 being covered through sponsorships, donations, and grants from the Summit County RAP Tax and the Utah Division of Arts and Museums.

8. **Second Presentation:** While I have not yet scheduled a more detailed presentation for USU Extension employees, I will follow up with those that manage or interface with centers that might benefit similarly from hosting traveling exhibits, including Andree Walker (Urban Extension including Wheeler Farm) and Jerry Goodspeed (USU’s Botanical Center and Wetland Discovery Point.) This information could also be relevant for potential future sites such urban agricultural centers.