



# MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

December 20, 2019

Daniel M. Filer, M.B.A., Ed.D.  
Chesapeake Watershed CESU Research Coordinator  
Interior Region 1 - National Capital Area  
Resource Stewardship & Science  
National Park Service  
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science - Appalachian Laboratory  
301 Braddock Road - Room 304  
Frostburg, MD 21532

Dear Dr. Filer,

I am writing to express my support of Monmouth University's application to become a non-federal member of the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystems Unit (CHWA CESU). Monmouth University is ideally located in New Jersey between two CESU units (CHWA and NAC). The University offers unique opportunities to work with a wide range of partners across a variety of habitats.

Monmouth University's faculty and programs conduct a variety of research and programs that strongly overlap with the core objectives of CESU: 1) providing knowledge and support in decision making; 2) conducting independent research; 3) creating and maintaining effective partnerships with federal agencies; 4) utilizing university resources to benefit students and faculty; and 5) encouraging professional development of current and future scientists, resources managers, and environmental leaders. Participation within CESU will help facilitate and foster stronger collaborations between Monmouth University and local and regional federal partners as well as provide unique opportunities for our faculty, staff, and students.

Monmouth University formally submits its application for consideration by the CHWA CESU. As a proposed member, The University agrees to fulfill all roles and responsibilities of a non-federal partners described in the CESU agreement supporting the CESU missions and goals. We look forward to offering our unique expertise and facilities in collaborating with CESU partners.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further Information.

Sincerely,

Rekha Datta, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

***A. Expression of desire to enroll in the CESU as a new partner institution/organization.***

Monmouth University wishes to apply for membership as a non-federal partner in the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CHWA CESU). Monmouth University has a strong history of collaborating and engagement with federal, regional, state and local partners that aligns with the mission of CHWA CESU.

***B. Confirmation that the institution/organization has read the CESU agreement and agrees to support the CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner, as described in the CESU agreement.***

Interim Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs has read the CHWA CESU agreement and this application and supports Monmouth University's application and commitment to the mission and goals of the CHWA CESU. Furthermore, she provides assurance that Monmouth University is committed to and able to meet the obligations of a non-federal partner. Anthony Lazroe, the Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts, will act as the primary contact and work with faculty, students and staff to promote robust collaborations and ensure that Monmouth University fulfills the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner.

***C. Description of the institution/organization, its mission, and the primary focus of collaborative activities to be supported through the CESU in the context of the CESU mission.***

Monmouth University is a private mid-sized independent, comprehensive institution of higher education committed to excellence and integrity in teaching, scholarship, and service. Located along New Jersey's northern coastline, Monmouth University offers a welcoming and dynamic setting for student development. Innovative academic programs, individual faculty attention (13:1 student-teacher ratio) make Monmouth make Monmouth an active and engaging learning experience Monmouth's beautiful coastal campus located in West Long Branch, NJ sits at the heart of a vibrant culture rich in history, the arts, technology and entrepreneurship. Just one hour from New York and Philadelphia, we take pride in preparing students to succeed in life after graduation. Our renowned faculty are actively involved in advancing academic research nationwide while encouraging meaningful community involvement and critical thinking for self-fulfillment.

Currently, Monmouth University is home to 4,400 fulltime undergraduate and 1,750 graduate students and through its offerings in liberal arts, science, and professional programs, Monmouth University educates and prepares students to realize their potential as leaders and to become engaged citizens in a diverse and increasingly interdependent world.

Monmouth University's core values include:

- Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Caring Campus Characterized by Mutual Respect
- Personal and Professional Integrity
- Diversity
- Service
- Empowerment of the University Community

In October 2014, the Board of Trustees endorsed the strategic plan that was developed by the campus community. The Monmouth University Plan: Our Commitment to Transformative Learning (<https://theplan.monmouth.edu/>) expresses a clear vision and strategy for Monmouth's future, reflecting the input of faculty, administrators, staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders. This plan has at its core three essential elements, the building blocks on which this transformation of the education experience will take place. They represent what we believe are the critical components of Monmouth education, the defining characteristics that shape our identity and distinguish the university from any other. Most of all, they are the indispensable ingredients for how we will prepare young men and women for the lives ahead of them.

### ***School of Science***

The School of Science is a community of learners and teacher-scholars that fosters active learning, quantitative reasoning, and scientific inquiry. Through integration of classroom, laboratory, research and practical experiences, students acquire skills necessary for life-long learning, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving as foundations for successful careers and informed, responsible citizenship in a world that is increasingly dependent on science, technology and engineering.

### ***Biology Department***

The Monmouth University Biology Department specializes in fostering critical thinking and the development of the scientific perspective while maintaining an academic environment in which the potential of each individual can be realized.

While the department's primary mandate is to prepare its majors in the Bachelor of Science in Biology program, they also maintain an accessible and relatable level of coursework that serves the general education requirements of non-science majors. The biology major is provided with a curriculum that establishes the essential background and skills to understand living organisms and to contribute to advancing the boundaries of this understanding. This foundation will prepare graduates for jobs in biological sciences and for admission to graduate programs and professional (e.g., medical, dental, and veterinary) schools.

The department is committed to experiential learning through rigorous laboratory exercises, field experiences, and the opportunity to participate in biological research, internships, and cooperative education programs. Students are afforded the opportunity to develop writing and presentation skills appropriate to function as a biologist while building a foundation in basic biological education. The curriculum provides an optional concentration in molecular cell physiology and a separate transdisciplinary degree in marine and environmental biology and policy.

***D. Description or list of the primary programs, departments, or other institutional divisions of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will likely be engaged in CESU activities. Include website addresses for further information, as appropriate.***

The School of Sciences at Monmouth University house the programs and departments from which the faculty, students, and staff would contribute to the initiatives of the CHWA CESU activities. Monmouth University envisions that the School of Science, Biology Department, Anthropology Department, and the Urban Coast Institute as the groups most likely to interact and engage with CHWA CESU partners.

***School of Science***

<https://www.monmouth.edu/school-of-science/>

The School of Science is a community of learners and teacher-scholars that fosters active learning, quantitative reasoning, and scientific inquiry. Through integration of classroom, laboratory, research, and practical experiences, students acquire skills necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving as foundations for successful careers and informed, responsible citizenship in a world that is increasingly dependent on science, technology, and engineering.

The School of Science's strategic plan is designed to provide a dynamic five-year working document for prioritizing initiatives to advance the future of the school. The following interrelated priority areas of the strategic plan include enhancing academic programs and curricula, including the teacher-scholar environment and student success, improving student recruitment and enrollment management, marketing and communications, and facilities, as well as alumni relations and the centers of distinction (Rapid Response Institute and the Urban Coast Institute). Finally, the School of Science would like to serve as a resource for promoting STEM education in our community.

***Biology Department***

<https://www.monmouth.edu/department-of-biology/>

The Department of Biology fosters a transformative learning experience by promoting active learning, scientific reasoning, and critical thinking while maintaining a rigorous academic environment in which the potential of each individual can be realized.

Promoting a culture of scientific collaboration, inquiry based learning is facilitated by small classes that allow for individual interaction with faculty and fellow classmates. The department is committed to experiential learning through course and laboratory exercises, educational field experiences, and participation in research, internships, and cooperative education programs. The Department is devoted to discovering and nurturing the talents and interests of students and guiding them in choosing a career for a successful life after Monmouth.

***Urban Coast Institute – Center of Distinction at Monmouth University***

<https://www.monmouth.edu/uci/>

Mission: To serve Monmouth University and the public as a forum for research, education, and collaboration in the development and implementation of science-based policies and programs that support stewardship of healthy, productive, and resilient coastal ecosystems and communities.

The Urban Coast Institute (UCI) was established in September 2005 and builds on the University’s program in Marine and Environmental Biology and interdepartmental strengths in marine biology, environmental science, business, economics and real estate, public policy, and the arts and social sciences.

The UCI maintains a principal focus on the interactions between humans and the coastal and ocean environment, and sustainable coastal development along New Jersey’s coasts and watersheds. Monmouth County and the New Jersey-New York region is an ideal “laboratory” for study of these issues. It has a unique focus on how science can inform public policy and the “human dimensions” of coastal ecosystem-based management, including the impacts of human use and development on coasts. The UCI seeks to foster collaboration among citizens, watershed and community organizations, governmental agencies, business, the scientific community, and other parties interested in coastal and watershed management, conservation, and restoration.

***E. A list of and brief description of the staff or faculty with expertise in disciplines and subject areas of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies.***

***Dr. Keith Dunton – Assistant Professor of Biology***

Dr. Dunton is a fisheries ecologist that primarily focuses on endangered and prohibited marine species. Dr. Dunton has over 15 years of experience working on the endangered Atlantic sturgeon within the Mid-Atlantic Bight and has published 12 Atlantic sturgeon-specific peer reviewed manuscripts and contributed over 40 scientific presentations on Atlantic sturgeon at conferences. Current research involves the use of technology (e.g., acoustic and satellite tagging) to understand spatial and temporal patterns in fish movements.

***Dr. Jason Adolf – Endowed Associate Professor of Marine Science***

Dr. Adolf is a phytoplankton ecologist that specializes in harmful algal blooms. Dr. has made significant contributions to the literature, publishing 39 peer-reviewed papers in the field. He joined Monmouth as a biology faculty member and affiliate of the Urban Coast Institute in 2017 after nine years at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, where he served as the chair and associate professor of marine science. Before going to Hilo, Adolf spent five years at the University of Maryland Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology in Baltimore, conducting harmful algal bloom research that included Chesapeake Bay; the Swan River Estuary in Perth, Western Australia; and the Plymouth Culture Collection of the Marine Biological Association of the UK.

***Dr. Sean Sterrett – Assistant Professor of Biology***

Dr. Sterrett is a herpetologist and wildlife ecologist. Current research focuses on understanding the influences of anthropogenic threats on wildlife populations and identifying effective and efficient management strategies for wildlife restoration and conservation, including the use of structured decision making. Current research uses GIS and spatial analysis and drones as tools to examine turtle and reptile abundance and habitat utilization.

***Dr. Pedram Danesghar – Associate Professor of Biology***

Dr. Danesghar is a plant ecologist who specializes in terrestrial Ecology, invasive plant species, ecosystem restoration, and climate change impacts on coastal forests in New Jersey and The Bahamas. Current interests include exploring climate change impacts on Maritime Forests, impacts of invasive species on coastal ecosystems and the New Jersey Pine Barrens, and restoration of rare and endangered plant species populations.

***Dr. Geoffrey Fouad – Assistant Professor of Geographer***

Dr. Geoffrey Fouad is a geographer, specializing in geographic information systems and water-resource investigations. He is the principal investigator currently on a multi-year funded project of Tampa Bay Water evaluating the hydrologic connection and inundation potential of wetlands north of Tampa Bay, Florida. He has published work on streamflow predictions in ungauged basins, vegetation drought stress based on satellite imagery, and regional predictions of groundwater levels for hydrologic models, surface-water investigations, and ecosystem assessments."

***Dr. Thomas Herrington – Associate Director of the Urban Coast Institute***

Dr. Thomas Herrington previously the director of the ocean engineering graduate program at Stevens Institute of Technology and the director of the New Jersey Coastal Protection Technical Assistance Service. Tom has over 25 years of experience in coastal sustainability and hazard mitigation research, including the analysis storm surge and wave impacts on coastal communities. He has authored or coauthored on over 100 journal, outreach and technical publications in the field of coastal and ocean engineering, including the NJ Sea Grant Manual for Coastal Hazard Mitigation, and is a contributing author to Blue Dunes: Climate Change by Design. He presently serves on the FEMA Region II Coastal Outreach Advisory Team and is on the Board of Directors of the American Shore & Beach Preservation Association and the Jersey Shore Partnership.

***Jim Nickels – Marine Scientist for the Urban Coast Institute***

Jim obtained his M.S. in Environmental Studies from Montclair State University and has 25 years of academic and professional experience in designing, implementing, and directing a variety of marine and inland water field research and sampling programs. He has managed and operated research vessels, scientific crews, and associated equipment. Jim is a USCG licensed captain and currently is the captain of the Monmouth University fleet of vessels. His expertise includes survey work in fisheries, plankton, benthic organisms, sediment, water quality, mitigation, and geophysics. Jim is a board certified hydrographer and has an extensive background in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), use and integration of Global Positioning System (GPS), and real-time mapping and data logging. He has held the position of Vice President at Aqua Survey Inc., and as Director of Marine Operations at the New Jersey Marine Sciences Consortium.

***John A. Tiedemann – Assistant Dean School of Science, Director of the Marine and Environmental Biology Program***

Mr. Tiedemann specializes in marine ecology, coastal zone management, environmental science, marine recreational fisheries, and marine and environmental education. Current applied research includes studies of striped bass and other recreationally valuable species, with an emphasis on best practices for catch-and-release of angled striped bass. John is also a USCG licensed captain capable of operating Monmouth Universities fleet of vessels.

- F. For academic institutions, include a description of student demographics and the institution’s status as a minority-serving institution (e.g., as defined by the U.S. Department of Education).***

**Fall 2018 Enrollment**

Total enrollment: 6,167  
Undergraduate: 4,448 full-time, 182 part-time  
Graduate: 1,537 (43% are full-time)

**Undergraduate Demographics:** Students come from 30 countries and 30 states.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>No. of students</b>
<i>African Amer/Black</i>	217
<i>Asian/Pacific Isl. Asian</i>	127
<i>Hawaiian/Pacific Isl.</i>	0
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	614
<i>Native American</i>	4
<i>White</i>	3146
<i>Two or more races</i>	113
<i>Other/Unknown</i>	43
<hr/> <i>Total</i>	<hr/> 4448

**G. Description or list of facilities, equipment, centers, or institutes that would provide support to the research, technical assistance, or educational activities of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.**

In 2018, Monmouth University's School of Sciences completed a major 40 million dollar renovation to the Edison Science Building. This innovative facility includes state-of-the-art faculty research labs, large conference rooms, teaching labs, and a vivarium for animal research. Within the research and teaching labs there is significant cutting edge instrumentation.

Monmouth University has a broad array of research vessels of various sizes to conduct locally and regionally marine and estuarine research (<https://www.monmouth.edu/magazine/meet-the-fleet/>)

**Research Vessels**

***R/V Heidi Lynn Sculthorpe***

Acquired from NOAA and originally built as a Coast Guard buoy tender, the Research Vessel Heidi Lynn Sculthorpe is fully-equipped to operate up to 20 nautical miles offshore. The 49-foot vessel has state-of-the-art technologies, is rigged to carry out a variety of scientific operations including trawling/dredging, deployment and recovery of oceanic buoys and equipment, scientific diving, collection of sediment cores/grabs, water quality sampling/monitoring, and hydrographic survey equipment that allow for detailed seabed mapping.

<https://www.monmouth.edu/uci/wp-content/uploads/sites/58/2018/10/heidi-lynn.pdf>

***R/V Seahawk***

The Seahawk is a versatile, trailerable, 27-foot fiberglass hulled survey vessel. It's cabin is equipped with heat and air condition and lighted for nighttime operations. The Seahawk is rigged to support a variety of scientific work including single and multibeam hydrography, sub-bottom profiling, side-scan sonar, ROV support, ADCP surveys, and benthic and water column sampling.

<https://www.monmouth.edu/uci/documents/2018/10/r-v-seahawk-info-specs.pdf/>

***R/V Littlehawk***

The Little Hawk is a versatile, trailerable, 18-foot fiberglass hulled center console survey vessel. The Little Hawk can be rigged to support a variety of scientific work including single and multibeam hydrography, sub-bottom profiling, side-scan sonar, ADCP surveys; benthic, fisheries and water column sampling along the coast.

<https://www.monmouth.edu/uci/documents/2018/10/r-v-little-hawk-info-specs.pdf/>

### ***Additional Vessels***

In addition to the above research vessels, we also have various size john boats, kayaks, canoes and other sampling vessels.

### **Greenhouse and Other Facilities**

The Biology Department also has 2,400 ft<sup>2</sup> greenhouse that was built in 1971. The greenhouse serves the Biology Department (MEBP program) as both a teaching and research facility. It is a one-story steel-frame and glass structure with temperature control and an irrigation system.

A new initiative underway for Monmouth University is the development of the Monmouth Marine and Environmental Field Station, to be located on the Navesink River in Rumson, New Jersey. The field station is a partnership of Monmouth University and the Borough of Rumson. Once completed, the field station will allow us to achieve local, regional and statewide prominence as a marine and environmental research and education center. Research projects at the field station will evolve to address a core set of objectives identified by faculty, including questions with local, regional and national implications. We will design and conduct projects that advance our knowledge of the Shrewsbury-Navesink River Estuary and Sandy Hook and Raritan Bays in order to better manage human impacts the and have it serve as a model to enhance our understanding and management of the dynamics of other coastal and estuarine ecosystems and watersheds impacted by urbanization and anthropogenic stressors.

### **Additional Resources**

Our faculty have a host of laboratory and field equipment to conduct a a wide range of ecological and environmental studies including a host of sampling equipment for fish, reptiles, and plankton (e.g., seines, fyke nets, trawls, plankton nets, turtle traps, electrofishers) as well as laboratory equipment (e.g, advanced microscopy equipment, centrifuges, flow cytometer, Ibex fecal coliform reader, etc..)

### ***H. Description or list of past research, technical assistance, and educational services supported through federal financial assistance awards that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.***

Technical representative Dr. Keith Dunton, has been co-PI on a number of grants supported through federal agencies engaged in CESU activities. Most of these projects have focused on understanding the spatial/temporal patterns of movements and interactions of fisheries on the endangered Atlantic Sturgeon. More recently, Dr. Dunton was funded to examine the impacts of recreational angling on prohibited shark species. Below is a full list of recent project funded through federal agencies/partners:

**New Jersey Sea Grant** - \$139,482. 2020. **K.J. Dunton** and J. Kneebone Survivorship and post-released behavior of prohibited sharks captured in the land-based recreational shark Fishery.

**U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.** 2016. Total Grant \$199,000; Monmouth portion \$31,992. M.G. Frisk, K.J. Dunton, E.C. Ingram. Monitoring Atlantic sturgeon habitat use in the New York Wind Farm Lease Area.

**National Marine Fisheries Service Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant.** 2014. Federal Share \$316,325; Total Grant \$532,203. Fox, D., **K.J. Dunton**, L.A. Bonacci, K.A. McKown, and J. Armstrong. Conservation engineering within the Monkfish Gillnet Fishery: Reducing negative fishery interaction through gear modification and assessing post-release mortality and behavior of Atlantic sturgeon.

**NOAA Species Recovery Grant Program.** 2010. Federal Share \$2,442,460; Total Grant \$2,715,716. Frisk, M.G., A. Jordaan, **K.J. Dunton**, D.O. Conover, D.D. Chapman, E.K. Pikitch, and M.C. Melnychuk. Determining the connectivity among and fine-scale habitat use within Atlantic sturgeon aggregation areas in the Mid-Atlantic Bight: implications for gear restricted management areas to reduce bycatch and improve population status.

**USFWS - New York State Wildlife Grant.** 2008. Federal Share \$354,414; Total Grant \$674,659. Frisk, M.G., A. Jordaan, **K.J. Dunton**, and D.O. Conover. Development of an effective area-based management scenario to reduce bycatch and improve the population status of Hudson River Atlantic sturgeon.

***I. Description or list of current formal agreements and informal relationships with federal agencies that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.***

***Naval Weapons Station Earle***

Currently we have an agreement to conduct Atlantic Sturgeon research at Naval Weapons Station Earle signed in August of 2016 Captain and US Navy Commanding Officer J.M. Steingold.

***Northeast Fisheries Science Center James J. Howard Marine Science Laboratory  
NOAA***

We currently have a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA Identification Number TT-000197). Through the CRADA, Monmouth University and the NOAA Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) will develop a collaborative research program that promotes the core objectives of the MU Marine and Environmental Biology and Policy (MEBP) Program, the MU Urban Coast Institute (UCI), and of the Ecosystems

Process Division (EPD) at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory (the Howard Lab) at Sandy Hook, NJ.

- J. Confirmation of the institution's/organization's willingness to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU, including research, technical assistance, and educational services (this overhead rate applies to the entire institution/organization for CESU activities).***

The Interim Provost & Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Monmouth University fully supports Monmouth University's application for membership as a non-federal partner in the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit. As a member of the CESU Monmouth University agrees to support the mission and goals of the CESU and to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% for activities conducted through CESU. We further understand that this rate applies to the entire institution/organization for CESU activities.

- K. Designation of a technical representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve on the CESU steering committee, participate in CESU annual/semi-annual partner meetings, and facilitate internal and external communication, promotion, and response to CESU correspondence and administrative actions (e.g., announcements, new member applications, processing agreements/amendments, five-year reviews).***

Dr. Keith Dunton will serve as the technical representative for Monmouth University and will serve on the CHWA CESU steering committee.

Keith Dunton, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Biology  
Monmouth University  
400 Cedar Avenue  
West Long Branch, NJ 07764

Office Phone: (732) 571-4432  
email: [kdunton@monmouth.edu](mailto:kdunton@monmouth.edu)

- L. Agreement to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members (e.g., faculty, students).***

Dr. Dunton in coordination with Anthony Lazroe, Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts, (OGAC) and Monique' Burger, Pre-Awards Grants Specialist in OGAC agree to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members. Dr. Dunton and Anthony Lazroe will distribute and work with faculty and staff in response to funding opportunities. Director of Grants and Contracts will assist faculty and staff with

materials related to proposal submission. All grants and funding submission will be submitted by the OGAC through Monmouth University's submission protocols.

- M. Signature (or endorsement) from an appropriate official, with authority to commit institutional resources in a binding multi-year federal cooperative and joint venture agreement (e.g., president, executive director, chief financial officer, vice president for research, director of sponsored programs).***

Please see attached letter from the Interim Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Rekha Datta.

- N. Letter(s) of support from one or more CESU federal agency partners sponsoring the new partner's application, including a description of successful past collaborative work supported through federal financial assistance awards.***

Please see attached letter of support from Commanding Officer of Naval Weapons Station Earle, Captain P.A. Fuller of the United States Navy.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
NAVAL WEAPONS STATION EARLE  
201 HIGHWAY 34  
COLTS NECK NJ 07722-5001

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5090  
Ser 00/009  
16 Jan 20

Dr. Daniel M. Filer, M.B.A., Ed.D.  
Chesapeake Watershed CESU Research Coordinator  
National Capital Region - Resource Stewardship & Science  
National Park Service  
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science - Appalachian Laboratory  
301 Braddock Road - Room 304  
Frostburg, MD 21532

Dear Dr. Filer:

SUBJECT: Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Letter of Support for Monmouth University

The Department of the Navy, Naval Weapons Station (NWS) Earle is pleased to provide this letter of support for Monmouth University's application to join the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU). Since 2015, NWS Earle has collaborated with Dr. Keith Dunton in the Department of Biology, School of Science, on his studies of the federally endangered Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*). This work has yielded valuable results by confirming the presence of the Atlantic sturgeon in the Raritan-Sandy Hook Bay complex. This information is vital to the Navy's long-term management of natural resources, especially the conservation of rare, threatened, and endangered species. Inventorying and assessing the presence and absence of at-risk species helps the Navy satisfy regulatory requirements as well as preserve, protect, and manage these species and their habitats.

NWS Earle looks forward to future collaboration with Monmouth University on this and other studies, which will be facilitated through partnership in the CESU, and strongly endorses their membership in the Chesapeake Watershed CESU.

Please contact Ms. Patricia Chizmadia at (732) 866-2254, if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. A. Fuller", is written over a horizontal line.

P. A. FULLER  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer