

## ReNUWit Research Exchange at University of California, Berkeley – By Dominic Carver

Last month I was lucky enough to attend the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) as part of my EngD research programme. I had originally planned to spend a full four weeks there but at the last minute an opportunity to attend the ReNUWit IAB meeting in Colorado presented itself. It was too good to turn down so I made a few last minute changes to my schedule and took the short flight from San Francisco to Denver. There I met up with the other STREAM and ReNUWit students who would all be taking part in a few days of research skills development and networking activities.

Needless to say the event was a great success and a fantastic experience which I am really pleased I had the chance to be part of. For those of you that may have missed it, Sarah Cotterill has written a blog describing the event in more detail which can be found at:

<https://powerfrompoo.wordpress.com/2016/09/09/where-the-west-lives/>



*STREAM researchers presenting their posters at Colorado School of Mines. Photo Courtesy of [unreadable]*

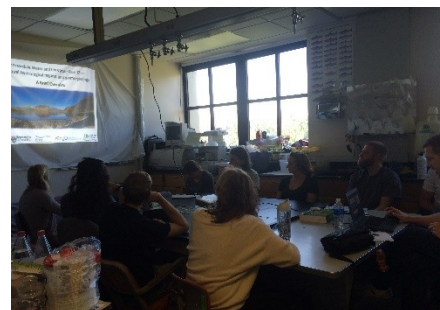
After flying back to San Francisco I was ready to begin my research activities at Berkeley. My project is centered on the hydro-ecological impacts of human alterations to natural flow regimes in rivers and the benefits of removing weirs and small dams. Although this is a relatively new and evolving subject, the United States is home to a significant number of well documented case studies and the aim of my trip was to speak to experts in this field and see what lessons could be learnt and applied to my project.

At Berkeley I was based in the Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management (ESPM). The majority of my time there was spent speaking to members of staff, PhD and post doc researchers and interviewing people from relevant organisations such as American Rivers, Trout Unlimited, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service & the U.S. Forest Service. I was able to gain a greater insight into their experiences from specific weir removal projects as well as comparing and contrasting the drivers, legal frameworks and monitoring techniques in the U.S. with those in the UK.

Whilst at Berkeley I had the chance to attend a variety of seminars both through ReNUWit and with ESPM as well as presenting my research to freshwater ecologists at the highly regarded Power Lab, led by Mary Power in the Department of Integrative Biology.

<https://ib.berkeley.edu/labs/power/>

I was also able to make a short visit to Stanford University to attend a lecture on the ‘Business of Water’ which focused on some of the future legal complications that water companies are likely to be presented with as a result of increased climate uncertainty.



*Presenting my project at the Power Lab, UCB.*

Thankfully the J1 VISA I was travelling on allowed for a 30 day grace period after my exchange during which time I was able to go on a short road trip and visit Yellowstone and one or two other national parks. On the way back to San Francisco I also had time to fit in a quick site visit to a weir removal project in Oregon and speak to consultant Denise Hoffert, author of ‘Small Dam Removal in Oregon - A Guide for Project Managers’, which has been a source of guidance for the Environment Agency.

*Visiting a weir removal project in Albany, Oregon.*



The ReNUWit exchange was an amazing experience that has definitely inspired me and given me new ideas for enhancing my research project. I'd like to thank Dr Ted Grantham of UCB for sponsoring my research visit and for his help during my visit.