NMSU’s Interdisciplinary Program in Conservation Ecology

With ever increasing pressures placed on our natural resources by a burgeoning human society and new threats such as global climate change, it is more important now than ever to create a core group of natural resource professionals and academics who are willing to devote their lives to educating our public and preserving our Earth. To this end, we are offering an interdisciplinary, undergraduate program in **Conservation Ecology**. The goal of this program is to train biologists for the current and future challenges that we face in the conservation and wise use of our Earth’s natural resources. An overriding principle of the program is to provide a solid foundation in the basic sciences coupled with a practical approach towards sustainability and stewardship. The curriculum encompasses several disciplines and includes a wide variety of courses from Biology, Fish, Wildlife & Conservation Ecology, Geography, Geology, Government, and Range Science.

As for the scope of the educational experience, students will obtain an overview of global biodiversity and receive an understanding of the ecological and evolutionary processes that have created and sustained it. Courses in population and community ecology, coupled with population viability analysis and risk assessment, will give students the necessary background to understand the theory and development of these fields as well as the tools to tackle real-world problems. Courses in ecology, evolution, and conservation genetics will expose students to the importance of conserving genetic variation in order to maintain adaptive potential within populations, thereby sustaining the evolutionary process. Students will also get exposure to courses addressing wildlife law and environmental policy, information vital for assisting governing bodies in making decisions regarding the protection and wise use of our natural resources. Skills obtained in the application of geographical information systems, molecular genetics and professional communication can also be acquired through various electives. In sum, we seek to provide undergraduate students with an education that will allow them the opportunity to contribute to the conservation of all life on Earth.