The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) is pleased to welcome Dr. Carrie Hritz as our new Associate Director of Research. Carrie joins us from the Census Bureau where she was the Branch Chief of Partnership Communication and Outreach working with tribal, state, and local governments as well as other federal agencies. Before the Census Bureau, Carrie was an AAAS fellow placed in the Geosciences Directorate at the National Science Foundation working in International and Interdisciplinary funding initiatives.

The position of Associate Director of Research entails serving on the senior leadership team, supporting the proposal funding process and the synthesis teams, developing and implementing qualitative assessment tools, and managing special projects.

Carrie has over 15 years of experience working across disciplines on socio-environmental issues.

“I am committed to the concept and approach that the “wicked” problems we face as humanity can only be addressed when the disciplinary boundaries that bind academic research are flexible,” Carrie said. “Disciplinary work has a role to play, but when questions, such as climate change impacts, drivers, environmental justice and sustainability are explored, robust and synthetic answers must include contributions from an array of integrated disciplines. The key to integration is synthesis of information and the formation of an accessible narrative.”

Carrie is trained as a landscape archaeologist with expertise in using Geospatial spatial tools, and regional expertise in the Middle East, looking at the patterns of human-environment interactions during the period of the first urban cities. From 1999-2013, Carrie led archaeological fieldwork in Syria, Turkey, and Iraq, participating in one of the first projects to work in the southern Iraqi marshes since the late 1960s. From 2008-2014, Carrie was faculty at Penn State University and ran the GIS lab in the Anthropology Department.

Carrie is excited to work with postdocs and the SESYNC-supported researchers that come through the center, and looks forward to building their capacity for interdisciplinary work.

“Scientific capacity building begins with training and providing students and researchers with the opportunity to explore the benefits of collaboration in the context of new and on-going research.”
SESYNC is in the unique position to lead in this effort by identifying the promising new research and providing the tools to support it, and I bring a unique skillset of collaboration on “big” picture concepts that can enhance this mission.”

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