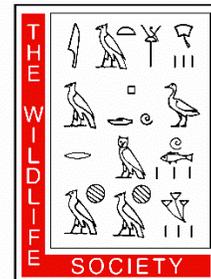




## U.S. Forest Service Native American Research Assistantship: Student Instructions



The [U.S. Forest Service](#) (USFS), through partnership with [The Wildlife Society](#), is offering research assistantships for Native American graduate or undergraduate students as part of the TWS professional development program for Native Americans. The program will facilitate student mentoring opportunities with USFS Research & Development (R&D) scientists, and promote student advancement and training for careers in natural resource and conservation-related fields. A paid stipend will be provided to cover living expenses during the assistantship time period. The Forest Service uses an ecological science-based approach to make informed decisions on the multiple-use management of the National Forests and Grasslands.

### Description

Short-term research assistantships are available for Native American students interested in wildlife and forest resources and excited to learn and work with an interdisciplinary team of researchers. We are seeking upper-level undergraduate (junior/senior) or graduate (M.S. or Ph.D.) students interested in conducting research in one of the following areas:

#### 1. **Passive Acoustic Monitoring in the Coastal Mountains of Oregon**

*Project Objectives:* 1) quantify seasonal and diel calling activity of northern spotted owls (*Strix occidentalis caurina*), barred owls (*Strix varia*), northern saw-whet owls (*Aegolius acadicus*), western screech owls (*Megascops kennicottii*), northern pygmy owls (*Glaucidium gnoma*), and great-horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*); 2) quantify factors that most affect occupancy rates of each focal owl species; and 3) quantify co-occurrence patterns among owl species.

*Location, Estimated Duration, and Housing:* Oregon. The assistantship will last for approximately 12 to 16 weeks within the March 1 – August 31, 2020 time period. There are two options for housing at no cost: 1) Cascade Head Experimental Forest (<https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/exforests/cascade-head/>) or 2) travel trailer that may be shared by 1 or 2 other field crew members. Affordable housing in Corvallis, OR is also available with the possibility for supplement funding to assist with housing cost. Students will need to identify, secure and pay (with assistance) for their own housing in Corvallis.

#### 2. **Bat surveys and Greater sage-grouse vegetation studies in the Buffalo Gap National Grassland of South Dakota**

*Project Objectives:* (1) To survey for bats located on the Buffalo Gap National Grassland using two to three types of bat detecting equipment. (2) Assist with an ongoing project studying the response of select forb species that are important to Greater sage-grouse to varying levels of fire intensity.

*Location, Estimated Duration, and Housing:* South Dakota. The assistantship will last for approximately 12 to 20 weeks during May 1 – August 31, 2020. The student must

identify, secure and pay for his/her own housing which the availability of is uncertain at this time. Assistance with the identification of housing options can be provided.

Only a limited number of projects will be funded and are dependent on a suitable student/mentor match.

### **Expectations:**

Applicants will participate in laboratory or field data collection, data entry, and analysis as it relates to wildlife ecology and management.

During the research assistantship students will improve their oral and written communication skills. The successful applicant will be provided the opportunity to assist in publishing manuscript(s) in peer-reviewed journals, popular press, and/or present findings at scientific meetings along with USFS R&D scientists (dependent on travel funding). At the conclusion of the assistantship, students will also be encouraged to bring the benefit of their knowledge back to their tribe (for example, mentoring and teaching middle or high school Native American students about the natural resources and wildlife field).

Applicants must uphold and conduct their activities in accordance with the [Code of Ethics and Standards for Professional Conduct](#) as prescribed by The Wildlife Society. The selected students will be given a brief orientation to The Wildlife Society and to the Forest Service prior to the start of the assistantship.

Applicants will be expected to work independently and as part of a research team. Some travel may be expected for the project.

### **Qualifications:**

Applicants must be a member of an American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, First Nations, or a Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or have some other indigenous identification, and be currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program from an accredited academic institution. A bachelor's or master's degree in wildlife biology, ecology, forestry or other closely related natural resource discipline is preferred. Students with associate's degrees from tribal colleges or universities or other community colleges are also eligible.

The ideal candidate will have strong verbal and written communication skills with demonstrated capabilities in science writing, ability to work both independently and as a productive member of a research team, and an ability to work under adverse field conditions (possible extreme weather, difficult terrain, venomous snakes and biting/stinging insects). Submission of a writing sample is optional.

Students with a GPA above 3.0 are preferred, and students with a minimum 2.5 GPA will be considered.

Current membership with The Wildlife Society is not required; however, please note if you are a current TWS member.

### **Additional Information:**

The appointment is for 3 to 5 months within the 2020 calendar year, depending on the project. Starting dates are negotiable within the context of the seasonality of the research topics. Support includes a living stipend of approximately \$6,000 (subject to adjustment depending on housing situation). Provided

housing is not guaranteed, but may be available in the area, offered at USFS facilities, or rented in local towns, dependent on project. See the project descriptions for more timing, location, and housing information.

Coverage under a medical insurance plan is required and the responsibility of the applicant. Transportation and relocation to and from the USFS office location will not be paid. Taxes and others federal, state, and local deductions are the responsibility of the applicant.

### **Application Procedure**

All application materials must be received by **JANUARY 18, 2020**.

To apply, please submit a brief cover letter indicating which research project you are applying for, resume/CV, official transcripts, verification of Native American ethnicity (e.g. tribal member enrollment), and two recommendation letters. In addition, please list your research project preferences in the order of most to least interested.

If you have any questions about the application process or the assistantship program please contact Jamila Blake at [JBlake@wildlife.org](mailto:JBlake@wildlife.org) or 301-897-9770 x307. Application packages can be emailed as a single PDF to Jamila Blake, TWS Professional Development Coordinator, at [JBlake@wildlife.org](mailto:JBlake@wildlife.org).