



MOSAICS IN SCIENCE

Diversity Internship Program

2021 Project Descriptions

NPS UNIT: CONGAREE NATIONAL PARK	PD #: 2021519
<p>Project Title: Fishing management and engagement specialist Position Type: Mosaics PLC Primary natural resource discipline: Biological Sciences Project keywords: Fishing, GIS, fisheries, stream ecology, aquatic resources Location: Hopkins, South Carolina</p>	
COVID-19 NOTICE	
<p>As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change and evolve, project timelines and structure remain flexible and it may be necessary to postpone start dates, begin work remotely, or reformulate the project's description. Should any development in the COVID-19 outbreak impair a project's timeline or results, the SIP Team will work with the park and project mentors to assess the situation and determine the best course of action at that time.</p>	
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS	

Position Description: The intern will assist the fledgling Congaree National Park (CONG; www.nps.gov/cong) fishing management program, which is currently in development through partnerships between (1) the CONG Resource Stewardship and Science program, (2) the NPS Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center, (3) the Congaree Biosphere Reserve (a UNESCO designation that fosters sustainable conservation efforts within local communities), and (4) NPS staff with the Interior Region 2 office.

Public Law 94-545, which established CONG in 1976, mandates that “the Secretary [of the Interior] shall permit access to sport fishing.” Providing reliable sport fishing opportunities, however, interweaves multiple park programs, goals, operations, and relationships. Natural resource management programs are essential because fishing relies on a healthy ecosystem managed through monitoring, research, and conservation partnerships. Cultural resource management is essential because fishing traditions are deeply connected with how previous peoples have perceived, settled, and used the CONG landscape. Visitor services are essential because anglers represent a distinct type of visitor/audience with specialized knowledge, equipment, goals, and needs. Ethnographic research at CONG, for example, has documented how park management adversely impacts the fishing traditions of local African American anglers; this awareness, however, frames opportunities for re-engaging these visitors/audiences. Facilities management is essential because anglers consider roads, parking, trails, restrooms, and more when accessing sites. Visitor and resource protection is essential because anglers sometimes may need emergency services, may see things in seldom traveled areas of the park, and are subject to state DNR regulations on activities and catch limits.

Triangulating all of the above needs and opportunities is currently beyond park capacity, and requires a dedicated position. The intern will serve in this role by pursuing the following activities:

1. Learning (quickly) the scientific, scholarly, policy, and visitor literature relevant to fishing at CONG
2. Visiting fishing access points at CONG (routinely) and the greater Congaree Biosphere Reserve (intermittently) in order to (a) collect targeted stream ecology data (water quality, geomorphology, etc.), (b) collect GPS data on fishing paths, (c) install monofilament recycling receptacles, and/or (d) contact/engage anglers
3. Engaging in (and reflecting on) regular angler contacts as interpretive opportunities to meet the following goals: (a) improve understanding of the angler community (i.e., demographics, motivations, activities, facility/infrastructure needs, key access points) at CONG and the Congaree Biosphere Reserve; (b) encourage the reporting invasive species (especially aquatic flora and fauna), adverse field conditions, or suspicious activities; (c) increase awareness of fishing policies (creel limits), public health advisories (mercury levels and waterborne illness), invasive species concerns (through accidental introduction of live bait), litter concerns, and other core NPS messaging; (d) learn about park resources through angler’s specialized knowledge and perceptions; and (e) encourage anglers to become volunteers for litter pick-ups and citizen scientists for monitoring stream ecology through the Adopt-A-Stream program. The intern, as an NPS partner, will absolutely *not* be directly involved with *any* enforcement activities (license checks, creel violations, etc.).
4. Developing and hosting at least two community programs, tours, or clinics related to CONG fishing, fisheries, and/or fishing traditions
5. Conducting office work to plan site visits, analyze field data, curate GIS data, manage daily notes and reports, develop program content, and write a final report

This position is offered through the National Park Service's Mosaics in Science Internship Program in partnership with Environment for the Americas.

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Congaree National Park (CONG; www.nps.gov/cong) “protects, studies, and interprets the resources, history, stories, and wilderness character of the nation’s largest remaining tract of southern old-growth bottomland forest and its associated ecosystems.” Most of CONG’s 26,000+ acres are protected as Federal Wilderness. CONG is recognized as a RAMSAR Wetland of International Significance, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and National Natural Landmark as well as a regional hiking, paddling, camping, and fishing destination.

The flat, forested coastal plain landscape has a subtropical climate with hot, muggy summers. Triple-digit heat indices and late-afternoon thunderstorms are not uncommon. Potential environmental hazards include venomous snakes, heat, wind (tree limbs), biting/stinging insects, and poison ivy. The park will both require and provide safety training and appropriate PPE.

CONG is located roughly 20 miles SE of Columbia, SC (the state capital), and about 20 minutes away from grocery stores and other amenities. Columbia offers urban entertainment, shopping, and dining. CONG is a 2-3 hour drive from both the Atlantic coast or the southern Appalachian mountains.

This project will involve a net balance of ~50% fieldwork and 50% office work. Interns should be comfortable lifting 50 lbs and also day hiking with a backpack in the summer heat. Field work may involve solo visits to fishing access points. Office work space will be hosted at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center.

QUALIFICATIONS

This internship will require the following minimum qualifications:

1. At least 12 hours of post-introductory coursework relevant to the science and/or management of aquatic resources (e.g., ichthyology, field zoology, resource management, stream ecology, riparian systems, biogeography, aquatic macroinvertebrates, fisheries management, fluvial geomorphology, and similar courses)
2. At least one course in social science and/or parks, recreation, and tourism
3. At least one course or short course / certificate that includes a concentration in GPS or GIS
4. Demonstrated personal, academic, professional, internship, or volunteer experience related to resource management or environmental science
5. Demonstrated ability to represent an organization with diverse audiences with professionalism, tact, and cultural sensitivity
6. Demonstrated personal, academic, professional, internship, or volunteer experience related to working outdoors
7. Demonstrated personal, academic, professional, internship, or volunteer experience related to writing and/or public speaking

The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident (“green-card-holder”) between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, inclusive, or veterans up to age 35. Prior to starting this position, a government security background clearance will be required.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicant must have a valid drivers license and a good driving record.

A personal vehicle is REQUIRED for this position.

HOUSING

Park housing is available and will be provided at no cost to the participant. The intern should have the option for free housing in the bunk-style dormitory at Congaree NP. This facility includes eight bunks in four rooms. The common living area and kitchen are shared by other interns and visiting researchers. A personal vehicle is required, as interns need their own transportation for food, medical, recreation, and other needs. The dorms should be full with long-term interns and researchers in the summer of 2021, which makes for a nice community with lots of opportunity to interact with other programs and projects.

INTERNSHIP START/END DATES

Start Date: 5/17/2021

End Date: 7/30/2021

Eleven weeks of the internship will be in the park. A mandatory Career and Leadership Workshop will be held in Washington, D.C. from August 1 – 5, 2020.

PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS TO ENVIRONMENT FOR THE AMERICAS

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