



MOSAICS IN SCIENCE Diversity Internship Program 2021 Project Descriptions

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| NPS UNIT: PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE | | PD #: 2021520 |
| Project Title: Modernize Communication of the Padre Island National Seashore Sea Turtle Science and Recovery Program in an Increasingly Online World Position Type: Mosaics PLC Primary natural resource discipline: Biological Sciences Project keywords: Science Communication, Social Media, Web Design, Conservation Education, Outreach, Bilingual Education, Behavior Change, Sea Turtles, Wildlife Viewing Location: Corpus Christi, Texas | | |
| COVID-19 NOTICE | | |
| 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. | | |
| PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS | | |

Position Description: Padre Island National Seashore protects the most important nesting beach in the US for the critically endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle and has been a member of a bi-national recovery effort for the species since 1978. The Park relies heavily upon in-person public programs to help educate the public on recovery and protection efforts of the Kemp's ridley and to minimize negative interactions with sea turtles by the public. However, due to the current global health crisis, methods currently employed by the Park, such as public sea turtle releases, are limited to protect the health and safety of visitors and staff alongside lower visitor attendance as more people opt-out of in-person experiences. Alternative ways of educating, engaging, and informing the public are desperately needed to provide educational and outreach opportunities to a wider audience or those with health concerns. The intern will work with the Division of Sea Turtle Science and Recovery and collaborate with the Interpretation Division supporting the following projects: 1. Develop and create web-based scientific communication and outreach products regarding sea turtles and ocean conservation to provide remote learning opportunities on the Park website and social media platforms; 2. The intern will receive training on outreach and distance learning tools and will apply this knowledge to create content aimed at providing educational information to visitors and the public on protected species at the Park, Park research programs, and conservation goals; and 3. Support the Sea Turtle Program through participation in all aspects, including nest monitoring, stranding response and necropsy, and hatchling and stranding releases.

The National Park Service (NPS) is committed to ensuring the safety of its visitors, staff, volunteers, and partners during the current global health crisis. Through this response, current visitor engagement and public outreach tools are quickly becoming outdated as practices are employed to protect visitors and staff at the Park-level and people look increasingly for ways to learn and interact from afar. There is a desperate need to explore new and alternative ways to reach the public as more and more people opt-out of in-person experiences for remote learning opportunities or those that are closer to home. This project will provide increased opportunities to educate and inform the public on protected resources, specifically sea turtles, within the Park and other NPS units. The intern's work will directly allow the Sea Turtle Program to continue research and conservation efforts that directly contribute towards the recovery of endangered sea turtle species at PAIS and meeting our NPS mission. Updates and new content on the NPS PAIS website and social media platforms will allow the Park and Sea Turtle Program to communicate the most current and relevant information on sea turtle science and conservation efforts. Exploring the best communication methods for approaching public engagement during a complicated global health crisis will provide the program with tools to better protect endangered species now and in an increasingly digital era.

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

Work Products: The intern will develop distance learning content relevant to sea turtle research and conservation for the NPS website and social media platforms. Additionally, the intern will work with both the Division of Sea Turtle Science and Recovery and the Interpretation Division to create other desired products such as pamphlets, photography, videography, graphic designs, or artwork. The intern will work alongside Park interpretive staff to ensure the materials created meet NPS standards and needs. The intern will examine alternative ways to communicate with and educate the public during times of limited in-person engagement and develop communication materials that address the need to modernize online learning resources, specifically on sea turtle recovery, and encourage sustainable behaviors while visiting the Park or other NPS units. Content created will be published such as videos/signs/reports/social media products. The intern will present the final products to the supervisor and will have the option to address other Park staff or agency partners.

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

PAIS is located on the Texas Gulf coast, approximately 20 miles east of downtown Corpus Christi, the 8th-most populous city in the state. The Park consists of 70 miles of undeveloped beach and protects dunes, coastal prairies, and tidal flats. It hosts over 380 bird species and the largest nesting beach for Kemp's ridley sea turtles in the US. Summers are hot and very humid, with temperatures in the 90's from June–August. Hurricane season runs from June–November. Corpus Christi has a number of popular attractions including the Texas State Aquarium, USS Lexington, and Mustang Island State Park. The nearest services, where intern will have access to grocery stores, pharmacy and recreation, are 18 miles from the Park. Work will primarily be in the office with occasional fieldwork. A desk and computer will be provided for office work. Fieldwork will be physically rigorous, involving travel down remote stretches of beach via park vehicle in hot, humid weather, conducted in the early morning, daytime or overnight hours. Fieldwork may involve the transport of live or dead sea turtles, collection of biological samples, and completion of datasheets. Fieldwork will require the use of personal protective equipment, safety equipment and radios. Potential job-site hazards include weather, beach driving, marine debris and exposure to live and dead animals. Work schedule will be flexible to accommodate weather, long days or night shifts of fieldwork.

QUALIFICATIONS

The intern should be working towards a degree in communication, journalism, psychology, sociology, natural resources or related discipline. Previous coursework in ecology or oceanography, communications, or psychology would be beneficial. Strong writing skills, a high level of scientific and computer literacy, and a passion for sharing science with others are required. Fluency in English and/or Spanish, with the ability to write and speak both languages, is desired but not required for the position. Photography and/or videography skills are essential. Competitive applicants will have experience in web or social media analytics, web content generation, knowledge of metadata, and be able to share examples of previous web or social media content they have created. Intern should feel comfortable sharing knowledge with Park visitors and will be expected to participate in presentations and hatchling releases. The applicant should be comfortable participating in fieldwork in a hot, humid, windy, and sandy environment. Prior to starting this position, a government security background clearance will be required.

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 host Park will be responsible for renting a furnished apartment/condominium locally for the duration of the internship. Intern will have their own room but may share the apartment/condominium with other park interns.

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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