



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Summer 2022

NPS UNIT: North Coast and Cascades Network

Position #: 185

Position Title: Biology Assistant

Position Type: Mosaics DHA

Primary natural resource discipline: Biological Sciences

Position Keywords: long-term ecosystem monitoring; science communication; field science; old growth-forest; subalpine vegetation

Location: Longmire, Washington

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.

POSITION DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS

Project Description: With the dramatic changes happening all around us and growing awareness of the climate crisis unfolding, it is important that park visitors connect with nature and also understand how certain aspects of the environment are changing. Vegetation systems such as alpine and subalpine meadows, mature and old-growth coastal and montane forests, and remnant prairies of the Puget Trough are foundational resources within the parks of the North Coast and Cascades Inventory and Monitoring Network (NCCN) and are among the primary features that many visitors seek to experience when planning a trip to the parks of the Pacific Northwest. These long-stable ecosystems are on the verge of significant changes that we seek to better understand through scientific inventory and monitoring efforts. The vegetation monitoring programs of NCCN track treasured resources to the public: the large towering trees of old-growth forests, the diminutive heather above treeline, and the gnarled whitebark pines. Yet these programs are still in the early stages of long-term monitoring, with many protocols just being established or entering the first round of repeat monitoring, and changes may become evident to naturalists and field technicians in the field long before this work is analyzed and available to park staff and the public.

This position will bridge the gap between basic science and public information by developing science communication visualizations that highlight the field work, monitoring results, and observations of vegetation change occurring within NCCN parks. The Scientist in Park (SIP) will participate as a technician in several vegetation monitoring protocols, observing and taking part in research and monitoring with NPS mentors and other field staff. The SIP will then draw from that field experience to develop brief science communication snapshots that share an important trend, communicate an exciting observation, or illustrate a new phenomenon to park staff and the public. These science communication snapshots can take many forms, for example, working with supervisors and other park specialists to develop a flat or interactive map using spatial analysis software; finding the right photograph or series of images that demonstrates a shift in vegetation communities; and working with mentors to tackle high impact data visualizations. The SIP will be vital member of the field research team during the height of field activity, and will connect with park interpretation and education specialists to communicate their critical work to colleagues and the public, bridging the gap between the work in the field and the importance to the park and each member of the community.



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Work Products: At the completion of the internship, deliverable work products will include:

- Three brief science communication snapshots connecting NCCN I&M vegetation vital signs field work to public audiences: depending on the qualifications and interests of the SIP candidate, these may include data visualizations constructed in R or a spatial analysis program, a story map, or illustrative photos
- Presentation to park leadership representatives, interpretive and subject matter experts on their experience connecting the research to a public audience
- Presentation to park volunteers (example Mount Rainier Meadow Rovers, MeadoWatch) on vegetation monitoring in the network

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work will be performed primarily in field settings. This field work may occur outdoors in a variety of terrain. Fieldwork may require travel on steep rocky slopes, in forests, streams, and wetland environments in a variety of weather conditions in wilderness, surrounding an active volcano. Work may include travel to other national parks.

Mount Rainier National Park is located approximately 2 hours south of Seattle, near the community of Ashford, WA. All services and amenities are available in the nearby communities of Packwood, Eatonville, or Morton. Limited services are available in Ashford, WA. The climate is considered moderate, but frequently overcast and rainy at lower elevations during fall, winter and spring, and early summer. At Longmire, the duty station of this position, substantial snowfall is common from November to May. Summers are normally sunny and pleasant with daytime temperatures ranging from the low 70's to low 80's and low humidity. You may visit the park's website at <http://www.nps.gov/mora>.

QUALIFICATIONS

The intern should be interested in developing botanical and field science skills and spending a significant amount of time in the field with technical specialists, learning new protocols and collecting detailed data. They should have a background or strong demonstrated interest in forestry, ecology, botany, or related fields and an interest in communicating science and developing creative ways to share research work with their community.

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 driver's license to drive a government vehicle.

A personal vehicle is **REQUIRED** for this position.

HOUSING

Park housing is available and will be provided at no cost to the participant. Yes, we will make every effort to have park housing available.

Shared housing may be provided at Longmire, the duty station of the position located within the park, Tahoma Woods, approximately 16 west miles from Longmire, or Ohanapecosh (north of Packwood, WA). Public transportation is not available in the area and a personal vehicle is recommended for access to services or recreation. Furnished housing may be in a single apartment, shared two-bedroom apartment or a 2-3 bedroom house. The participant will need to bring bedding, kitchen supplies, towels, and other household items.



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Park housing availability may change depending on COVID-19 restrictions in place in spring 2022. Housing can also be found in the neighboring communities of Ashford and Packwood.

INTERNSHIP DATES

Start Date: 05/23/2022

End Date: 08/15/2022

Number of Weeks: 12

Flexible Start Date: Yes

Eleven weeks of the internship will be in the park. A mandatory Professional Development Workshop will be held in Washington, D.C. from August 1 - 4, 2022.

LIVING ALLOWANCE

12 weeks (\$640/week = \$7,680)

Partners

This position is offered through the National Park Service's Scientists in Parks (SIP) Program in partnership with various organizations.



PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS TO ENVIRONMENT FOR THE AMERICAS

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