

Dr. Christina Staudhammer in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Alabama (<http://cstaudhammer.people.ua.edu/>) is now inviting applications for a MS position starting in fall 2019/spring 2020. The student will work on a project in quantitative urban forestry, partially funded by a grant from NSF-Ecosystems.

The benefits of urban forests to city-dwelling people include recreation, pollution, mitigation, energy savings, and water purification. However, fundamental questions still remain about the resistance and resilience of urban ecosystems to anthropogenic change, especially associated with projected alterations in global climate. Hurricane Irma, while destructive, created an opportunity to evaluate the impact of windstorms on urban forests. Utilizing pre- and post-storm field-measured and remotely sensed data, a student is sought to model the relationship between tree, landscape, and socioeconomic characteristics, storm variables, and urban forest damage. This work will fill gaps in our knowledge about the ecosystem services provided by urban forests. The overarching goal is to enhance our scientific understanding of the role of urban forests at local to regional scales, and how they respond to disturbance.

It is expected that prospective graduate students will develop their own research plans and goals, and therefore should be self-motivated and independent. Students should be interested in combining ecology with statistical modeling. Students should have demonstrated experience in statistics, as well as a background forest ecology, geography, or environmental science. A solid working knowledge of SAS and/or R is required, and those with strong quantitative skills will be given preference.

This position is primarily a Teaching Assistantship, supplemented by grant funding. However students can apply for additional funding. Interested students will earn a graduate degree from the Department of Biological Sciences. The project will also offer the opportunity to interact with researchers from the USDA forest service, as well as researchers from the University of Florida and University of South Florida.

The University of Alabama is located in Tuscaloosa, a college town of ~100,000, surrounded by extensive and varied forests. These forests, and the greater region, provide a wide range of recreational amenities including rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking and mountain biking.

To be eligible, students must meet the graduate admission requirements of the University of Alabama: an undergraduate GPA > 3.0 overall, 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours in a degree program or 3.0 for a completed graduate degree program, and a 300 on the GRE. If interested, email a short summary of your research interests, an unofficial transcript from undergraduate (and post-graduate, if applicable) work, as well as a CV to Dr. Christina Staudhammer ([cstaudhammer@ua.edu](mailto:cstaudhammer@ua.edu)).