M.S. Assistantship: Study of wind resistance of southeastern pine species

The Dept. of Plant Biology at the University of Georgia and the landscape ecology lab at the Jones Center at Ichauway are seeking applicants for a M.S. assistantship to investigate wind resistance of southeastern tree species. The position is available starting **fall semester, 2020 with the potential to begin as a paid seasonal field technician in summer 2020.** Funding is provided for at least two years, and consists of a competitive stipend plus six semesters of instate tuition.

The student will conduct field-based winching experiments on southeastern pine species as well as investigate the impacts of precipitation on wind resistance. The ultimate objectives of the study are to provide new knowledge regarding risk of hurricane damage to pines, and guide decisions on forest management and restoration. The research will combine experimental tree winching with soil moisture manipulation to mimic the effects of hurricanes. While the applicant would be an M.S. student in the Dept. of Plant Biology at Univ. of Georgia, the work would be co-sponsored by the Jones Center at Ichauway, and the field work would take place in southwestern Georgia at the Jones Center, a privately-funded 28,500-acre research facility and preserve in Newton, Georgia. The successful applicant will be expected to spend much of the summer field season in residence at the Jones Center where limited housing may be provided, while the academic year will be predominantly on the UGA Athens campus completing coursework. The M.S. degree will be coadvised by Dr. Jeffery Cannon at the Jones Center (http://www.jonesctr.org/about/staff/cannon.php), and Dr. Chris Peterson in the Dept. of Plant Biology at UGA (http://research.franklin.uga.edu/cjpeterson/).

Successful applicants will have the ability to participate, organize, and manage field research efforts, and have strong quantitative and writing skills. The project will involve mechanical winching of trees, thus the successful candidate must be willing to conduct strenuous physical activity (climbing, and lifting) under demanding field conditions (heat, high humidity, heights, and insects). Candidate will participate in tree climbing with safety gear up to 35 feet. Applicants with undergraduate research experience or fieldwork experience in forest ecology, biology, or a closely related discipline are preferred.

To apply, submit a CV, transcripts, GRE scores, contact information for three references, writing sample, and letter of interest via e-mail to: Chris Peterson, Professor, Dept. of Plant Biology, Univ. of Georgia (chris@plantbio.uga.edu). Applications received by January 31, 2020 will receive full consideration, and preference may be given to those that can begin work as a seasonal field technician as early as summer 2020. Candidates must also apply to the University of Georgia graduate school and must meet all requirements of the Graduate School. See https://grad.uga.edu/index.php/prospective-students/domestic-application-information/requirements/application-procedures/ for details.