Fully-funded Doctoral Research Assistant Fall 2020

Incorporating migration ecology, climate science, and human dimensions research into conservation planning for waterfowl and recreationists

PhD in Fish and Wildlife Biology and Management, Conservation Biology, or Applied Ecology

Department of Environmental and Forest Biology, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Start Date: August 2020, open until filled, applications preferred before 2 March 2020.

Description and requirements: We seek a highly-motivated and experienced individual to enroll in ESF’s doctoral program to build upon our prior research focused on migration modeling and predicted changes in distributions of waterfowl during the non-breeding season. In partnership with Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, the selected individual will analyze 60-years of bi-weekly waterfowl survey and hunter activity data to develop migration models for use in conservation and recreation planning. We also will incorporate additional waterfowl and recreationist (i.e., hunters and birders) datasets from throughout North America, including use of citizen science data on waterfowl abundance and birding activity (e.g., eBird) to investigate relationships between recreational activity and changes in waterfowl distributions and abundances. The project includes 3 aims 1) development of weather-based migration models for waterfowl, 2) estimating past and future changes in migration timing using climate change models, and 3) determining impacts to hunter and birder activity and participation. The project unique provides opportunities to collaborate with a diversity of state and federal wildlife biologists, climate-modelers, human dimensions experts, and waterfowl and wetlands conservation stakeholders. Strong data management skills and organization of large datasets required. Those experienced with ESRI software, Python script, and Bayesian modeling preferred.

Program Requirements: The Research Assistantship is funded at a minimum of $23,500 per year for 4-years with full tuition waiver. Competitive applicants typically have a GPA 3.5 or higher and GRE scores above average in all categories with 2 of the 3 scores > 75th percentile, prior publications or manuscripts in review preferred.

Applying: Email a letter of interest, resume, unofficial transcripts, and GRE scores (preferably as a single pdf) to Dr. Michael Schummer (mlschumm@esf.edu). After an interview, the successful applicant will be encouraged to apply to the Graduate School at SUNY ESF. Open until filled.

Location: SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), Syracuse, New York. SUNY ESF is home to the fourth largest undergraduate and graduate education program in wildlife science, conservation biology, and aquatic and fisheries science in the United States; it is by far the largest such program in the northeastern region. SUNY ESF is located in central New York with abundant outdoor and cultural opportunities with the Finger Lakes wine region, many state properties and national wildlife refuges, Lake Ontario, the 6.1 million-acre Adirondack Park, High Peaks Region, Lake Placid Olympic Village, and New York City nearby. The Montezuma Wetlands Complex, the first Important Bird Area designated in New York, is less than an hour drive from campus. With its diverse lakes and wetlands, myriad breeding, migrating, and wintering birds,
and a landscape rich in human history, the region provides an ideal place for study of wetland-wildlife. In collaboration with a diversity of conservation stakeholders throughout North America, we meet the challenges of a changing world.