PhD or MS Assistantship, University of Montana, Forestry and Conservation Sciences

Applications are being sought for a graduate assistantship to investigate the role of fire- and drought-resistance traits in mediating post-fire tree mortality. The graduate student will conduct field research and analyze new data as well as a large existing database to elucidate how fire injury, drought stress, tree characteristics, and other factors contribute to the likelihood and timing of tree mortality. The research will improve our fundamental understanding of tree mortality and the results will be integrated into decision support systems used by land managers. The student will work with an established team of federal and academic researchers with ample opportunities for networking and professional development beyond their academic program.

Responsibilities include data collection, management, and analysis; project management; publication of results in refereed journals; management outreach and science communication; collaboration with university researchers, federal scientists, and land managers; communicating results through presentations, webinars, and other formats; and service as a teaching assistant.

Applicants may apply to either the MS or PhD degree track. Two years of support are available at the MS level and three years of support are available at the PhD level. Academic year support will be split between Research and Teaching Assistant appointments and includes salary, tuition, and mandatory fees. Travel funds are available for fieldwork and a scientific conference presentation. Paid field work for the project is scheduled for May-July 2025. Academic start dates are flexible, with potential start dates of August 2024, January 2025, or August 2025.

Required Qualifications:
- All the requirements for admission to the relevant degree program.
- Coursework in botany, plant physiology, dendrology, dendrochronology, forest ecology, or fire ecology.
- Experience managing and visualizing ecological data.
- Ability to work independently and to manage multiple responsibilities and deadlines.

Preferred Qualifications:
- Ability to implement applied statistical analyses in R.
- A record of publication in the peer-reviewed literature.
- Field or laboratory experience in botany, plant physiology, dendrochronology, forest ecology, or fire ecology.
- MS degree in a related field.

To apply: Send a single file containing application materials to Dr. Alina Cansler at alina.cansler@umontana.edu with a subject line of Â"Fire-adapted Tree Traits AssistantshipÂ". The file should contain a cover letter describing interest in an MS or PhD program and an explanation of your qualifications, current CV, unofficial transcripts, and contact information for three professional references. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning on April 8, 2024. *Members of historically underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.*

About UM and Missoula. The University of Montana is in aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people, and draws a diverse population of students, faculty, staff, and researchers. The UM W.A. Franke College of Forestry & Conservation is located in Missoula, MontanaÂ's second-largest city with a population of 80,000 residents. Missoula offers a high quality of life, with multiple rivers, trails, and wilderness areas within minutes of campus, outstanding amenities for families, a vibrant arts community, and regular performances by national musical acts. Missoula and the surrounding area host an impactful land management and conservation community, including major federal research labs, state, federal, and tribal land management agencies, and significant conservation and environmental NGOs.

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