



Research Professional II

University of Georgia
Odum School of Ecology
Applied Wildlife Conservation Lab

Salary: \$35,000

Work schedule: 40 hrs/week

Commitment: One year, with potential for renewal

Start date: 1 February 2019

Job Description: The Research Professional II will serve as a full-time field manager on a gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) project with Southern Ionics Minerals, LLC. (SIM) in south Georgia. Following the initial training period, they will coordinate field operations at the SIM heavy mineral sand mining site (Mission Mine in Brantley & Charlton Co., GA). They will coordinate pre- and post-relocation gopher tortoise surveys on the SIM mine site, including SIM personnel in operating the equipment to conduct tortoise excavations.

In addition, the RP will assist with operations at the tortoise recipient sites where we are conducting multiple research projects on the spatial ecology, behaviors, and integration of translocated tortoises into the resident population. As these sites are owned and managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR), the RP will work directly with GA DNR on relocation logistics, annual management plans (burning, forest stand thinning), and assist with coordinating agency operations with those of SIM. The RP will also assist with agency permitting processes as needed to fulfill the operations of the SIM contract. The RP will work alongside the lab supervisor (Dr. Kimberly Andrews) to issue final decisions and recommendations for SIM and partnering state and federal agencies.

Research responsibilities will include, but are not limited to: deploying and maintaining stationary wildlife cameras at burrows, tracking gopher tortoises through use of GPS and VHF technology, spatial data collection with a handheld GPS unit, gopher tortoise transect burrow surveys, burrow scoping, nest searching, burrow excavations (both by hand with a shovel as well as supervising mechanical excavator excavations), morphometric processing of priority species, scute marking for identification, assisting with research sample collection (e.g., disease swabs, blood draws, ectoparasites), recipient site preparation, starter burrow digging, and other supporting field tasks as needed. Additional responsibilities include winter surveys for eastern indigo snakes along with seasonal species and habitat surveys for other priority animal and plant species (e.g., flatwood salamanders, striped newts, hairy rattleweed). Data processing and analysis tasks will vary but will include data entry and management and GIS mapping and



analysis regularly. The RP will participate in preparing data and publications for output to the scientific community along with occasional presentations at scientific conferences.

Administrative responsibilities will involve attending monthly budget and planning meetings with Dr. Andrews, submitting weekly update reports on field operations, drafting annual reports, and conducting wildlife safety trainings for SIM personnel. This position would also be responsible for coordinating with the SIM safety officer to maintain MSHA certifications for all project personnel. Additionally, the RP will have some supervision of the project Research Technicians (2-3) in entering, managing, and developing the data and maps necessary for weekly, monthly, and annual reporting with SIM.

This position is required to support housing and transportation expenses and provide their own computer. They will work out of shared office and lab space at the UGA Marine Extension facility in Brunswick, GA.

This position is paid from external grant funding and is therefore dependent upon funding availability. A minimum commitment of one year is required; there may be a possibility of extending the position dependent upon project needs, employee performance, and available budget.

The Schedule: Typically, the RP will be expected to work 5 days a week (M-F) and will involve 3-4 field days and 1-2 office days; however, the work schedule may require slightly shorter or longer work weeks depending on the weeks' task schedule and mine plan.

Minimum Qualifications: Master's degree or equivalent combination of Bachelor's degree plus experience and skills required. Area-specific certification may be necessary, including MSHA safety and first aid training that are required as a new employee working on Mission Mine.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Expert knowledge of southeastern herpetofauna and a dedicated interest in conservation.
- Extensive knowledge of *Gopherus* spp. biology, habitats, along with experience dealing with conservation and regulatory aspects of the management of the species and their habitats.
- Ability to independently use GIS mapping, data management, and field navigation apps, and to train and supervise technicians and students operating this software.
- A high-level of organization and professionalism, quality performance, and direct and efficient communication. Required to organize own schedule and coordinate those of field personnel.
- Driven to produce scientific output and organize data in manners appropriate for those publications and scientific presentations.
- Experience with working with government agencies and consultants, along with coordinating meetings, reports, and permitting is highly desirable.



- Ability to work well with others, operate independently, good communication skills, and have an overall positive attitude.
- Flexibility with scheduling and physical and mental resiliency are key to achieving our work plan goals in an efficient manner.
- Capacity to work independently and be a good team player.
- Good physical condition and a patient temperament - this job will be physically demanding, requiring long days in the very hot and sometimes very buggy south Georgia summer. Physical exertion may involve walking up to 5 miles/day during surveying or carrying up to 25 lbs of equipment.

Benefits: This position is a full-time, benefits-eligible position with paid federal holidays and vacation and sick leave.

Project Supervisor: Dr. Kimberly Andrews

Apply through the UGA iPAWS website: The posting is labelled as “Research Professional II (Staff)” through Dept 551 (School of Ecology). Posting #: [S02050P](#).

Inquiries for additional details can be directed to Kimberly @ kma77@uga.edu.

Please use the subject line: RESEARCH PROFESSIONAL