PhD Position, Northern Arizona University: Forests, Fire, and Fauna in the Southwestern US

Northern Arizona University School of Forestry seeks to fill one PhD position funded through a Teaching Assistantship. This position will focus on spatial patterns of wildfire disturbance related to forest dynamics, changing climate, post-fire recovery, and biodiversity conservation in the Jemez Mountains of New Mexico. The PhD student will participate in and conduct investigations to relate endangered wildlife species distributions to the history of fire (severity, frequency, area burned), forest dynamics (patch size and isolation; composition and structure), and climate. Applicants should possess a background in wildlife biology, strong analytical and statistical skills, demonstrated experience with GIS and spatial analysis, and a commitment to conservation of vulnerable species and their habitats.

The position will be supervised by Dr. Andrea Thode (andi.thode@nau.edu) and Dr. Rachel Loehman (rloehman@usgs.gov) and advised by Dr. Nancy Karraker (nkarraker@uri.edu).

The position start date is Fall 2021. The recipient of this position will work 20 hours a week as a teaching assistant, and will receive an annual stipend, university health insurance, and a tuition waiver. Funding is available until the completion of the degree.

Required qualifications

- All of the requirements for admission to the NAU School of Forestry PhD program
- A research-based MS degree in forestry, ecology, natural resources, biology, or a related field
- Strong analytical and quantitative skills; ability to implement complex, applied statistical analyses in R
- Experience acquiring and managing large datasets
- Experience with GIS and geospatial software, data, and analytical methods
- Experience with field sampling, including logistics and off-trail navigation
- Ability to work independently and to manage multiple responsibilities and deadlines
- Demonstrated research abilities including development of research questions, study design and implementation, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of results via publications and presentations.
How to apply
Please send the following documents to Dr. Andrea Thode email (andi.thode@nau.edu) and Dr. Rachel Loehman (rloehman@usgs.gov) by March 10, 2021:
- A one-page cover letter clearly stating experience, qualifications, and research interests
- A current CV describing your education and experience relevant to the position
- Unofficial transcripts (undergraduate and graduate)
- A recent writing sample (e.g., peer reviewed publication, thesis, etc.)
- Contact details for three references (including at least one academic reference)

Additional materials may be requested later in the process. Please note that the successful applicant must be based on the Flagstaff campus for the duration of the degree. Requests to study remotely will not be considered (excepting COVID issues).

About Northern Arizona University
Northern Arizona University is a 29,000 student-institution with its main campus in Flagstaff, a city of about 70,000 at the base of the San Francisco Peaks. Flagstaff is known for its year-round recreation opportunities, including skiing, hiking, and rock climbing, as well as its proximity to the Grand Canyon, four national forests, and numerous state parks and wilderness areas. More information about NAU’s graduate programs in Forestry, including eligibility requirements, can be found at https://nau.edu/forestry/degrees-and-programs/phd-forest-science/. Our graduate student handbook can be found at: https://nau.edu/forestry/internal-resources/graduate-student-handbook/.