

**2024 Summer Field Assistants:  
Study of Endangered Amphibian Disease and Recovery  
Sierra Nevada, California**

<http://mountainlakesresearch.com>

**Position summary:** The Mountain Lakes Research Group, based at the University of California Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory in Mammoth Lakes, CA, USA, is hiring one to four assistants for the Summer 2024 field season. Successful applicants will work in the Sierra Nevada mountains as part of a team restoring populations of the endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs (*Rana muscosa* and *R. sierrae*) in the presence of the amphibian chytrid fungus, a widespread amphibian pathogen. We will:

- Conduct capture-mark-recapture surveys to assess the status of frog populations established via translocation or reintroduction in previous years
- Reintroduce captive-reared frogs
- Translocate wild frogs
- Conduct amphibian visual encounter surveys
- Collect diagnostic skin swabs from frog populations to quantify frog-pathogen dynamics
- Collect samples from individual frogs to assess immunological, microbial, and genomic characteristics
- Collect eDNA samples
- Deploy temperature and soundscape recorders

The research will take place at remote backcountry locations in Yosemite and Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and adjacent national forest wilderness areas. The team will work a variable and flexible schedule, but backcountry stints are typically 5-8 days (2-4 days off). This research is part of a multi-year project funded by several federal and state agencies and private foundations.

Mountain Lakes Research Group fosters a supportive work environment that relies on open and honest communication and strong mentorship. We welcome diversity in experiences, values, and perspectives that arise from differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, geographic region, and more.

**Eligibility and requirements:** The ideal candidate will have extensive backpacking experience in mountain environments, previous experience conducting field research in remote locations, and experience directly handling amphibians. The ideal candidate will have strong leadership and communication skills and demonstrated ability to work individually and as a team member.

- To be considered for this position, you **MUST** have extensive backpacking experience at high elevations (>10,000ft; this is not negotiable). Extensive backpacking experience means:
  - More than an occasional short trip.
  - Trips of multiple consecutive nights.
  - Substantial daily mileage (10+ miles per day).
  - Carrying one's own overnight gear and food.
- You **MUST** be able to navigate off trail using a map and GPS device. Off trail travel includes rocky 3rd class terrain.

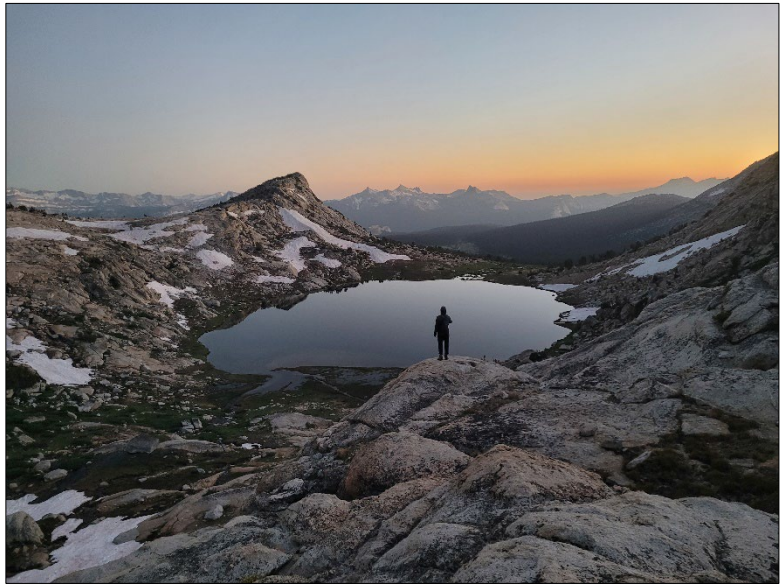
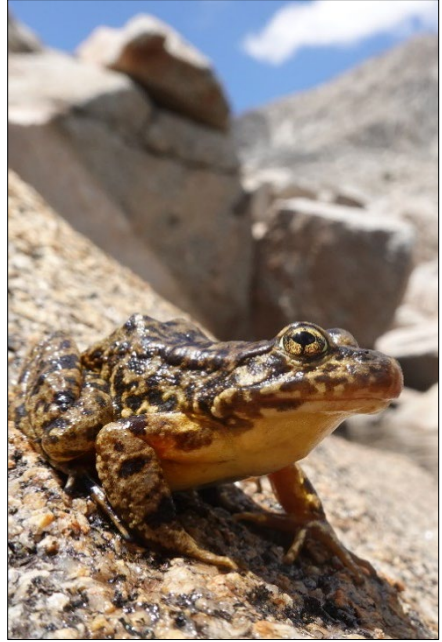
- You **MUST** be comfortable working alone in remote areas for hours at a time and feel comfortable collecting data independently while managing the challenges of a montane or alpine environment (inclement weather, altitude, mosquitos).
- You **MUST** have a passion for conducting field research, under all conditions.
- You should have experience capturing and handling amphibians, and ideally inserting PIT tags.
- Employees generally have completed BA/BS (or higher) degrees in ecology or wildlife biology.
- You should have a personal vehicle; work-related mileage is reimbursed.
- You should have personal backpacking equipment in functional condition (backpacking gear is not provided).
- Although not required, training history or current certification in wilderness medicine (ex.: Wilderness First Aid, Wilderness First Responder) is an asset.
- You must be available for the duration of the position, approximately early June to late September.

**Compensation:** Assistants will be paid \$20-22/hour. Group housing is provided at no cost to technicians at the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve in the resort town of Mammoth Lakes, California. When in the backcountry (which will be most of the time), assistants are reimbursed for food expenses and for personal vehicle use.

**How to apply:** The application period is **December 19, 2023, to January 12, 2024**. Applications **MUST** include:

- (1) **Cover letter** that states why you are interested in the position, and why you would be an asset to the project. Please detail your backpacking experience (mileage, elevation, duration, location, etc.) and research experience (work with amphibians, PIT tagging, small vertebrates, listed species, etc.).
- (2) **Resume** that includes current contact information (email addresses and phone numbers) for three references who are familiar with your research and/or backpacking experience.
- (3) **Transcripts** from undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) institutions. Unofficial copies of transcripts are acceptable.

**To apply, email applications (formatted as a *single* PDF document) to Thomas Smith and Alexa Lindauer ([mountainlakesresearchgroup.jobs@gmail.com](mailto:mountainlakesresearchgroup.jobs@gmail.com)) by January 12, 2024. Hiring decisions will be completed by mid-February 2023. Information about the Mountain Lakes Research Group, including scientific publications, is available at <http://mountainlakesresearch.com>.**



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