

To whom it may concern-

My name is Leanna Tacik, and currently I am a senior at Longwood University. This summer I am working with Dr. Kenneth Fortino, an Assistant Professor of Biology at Longwood, on researching the variation of diversity of small aquatic insects and organic matter in small ponds. In order to collect data we travel onto the water in a raft and take mud samples at different locations within the pond. These samples are taken back to our lab, and there they are filtered for insects and organic material (e.g. leafs, sticks, etc.).

The pond upon your property is an ideal for our continuing of our research. We ask your permission to be able to access the pond, and take various mud samples from it. Also, while on the pond we will attempt to create a mapping of it and take various visibility measurements of the water; during the collection process nothing will be harmed or manipulated. If granted access, any data that is collected we will gladly share and discuss with you.

Being able to perform this research will give us a better understanding of the factors that affect the storing of carbon within ponds. Ponds are much understudied, and with every data collection more knowledge will be added to help the scientific community understand the structure of life within it. Also, while performing this research this summer, my professor and I are taking part of a new research program called LU-PRISM. This program requires me to work forty hours a week with my participating professor, and research a certain topic within the professor’s area of interest. The program will help me learn how what it is like to maintain a fulltime job, and the proper ways to discuss scientific findings.

If given the chance to study your pond, you will not only help the scientific community expand its knowledge, but you will help me prepare for my future career in the field of biology. I will be able to grow as a student, and better my skills in researching and scientific writing. If you are interested letting us sample your pond please contact Dr. Kenneth Fortino at fortinok@longwood.edu.

Thank you,

Leanna Tacik