

Steven DiFalco

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Education

University of Connecticut

Master of Science, Natural Resources and the Environment

Storrs, CT

2018-Present

- Human Dimensions of Roadside Vegetation Management (Advisor: Anita Morzillo)

State University of New York at New Paltz

Bachelor of Science, Organismal/Environmental Biology (Advisor: David Richardson)

New Paltz, NY

2009-2013

- Minor: Italian Studies, Università degli Studi "Carlo Bo": Urbino, PU, Italy

Fall 2012

Resource Management and Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant

January 2018-Present

University of Connecticut

Storrs, CT

- Planned, organized, and conducted research focused on attitudes towards roadside vegetation management in the state of Connecticut
- Spatial analysis using R, Python, and ArcGIS programming to explore the landscape scale influences on attitudes towards vegetation management
- Oversaw 10 undergraduate students in data entry, ArcGIS mapping, and data analysis
- Prepared report and presentation for manuscripts, conferences, and funding agency

GIS Technician (volunteer)

January 2019- Present

Joshua's Trust

Mansfield, CT

- Systematically organize and maintain trails project files
- Field data collection of hiking trails and other features
- Create an ArcGIS Online trails map for the Town of Mansfield which incorporates town, state, and trust information in one place for improved accessibility to parks

Graduate Mentor

Summer 2018

Natural Resource Conservation Academy

Storrs, CT

- Lead field activities and discussions of a broad range of natural resource conservation topics with high school students in a week-long program.

Natural Resource Specialist

April 2016 - December 2017

Rockefeller State Park Preserve

Pleasantville, NY

- Develop and implement park-wide restoration of natural areas, including site planning, site preparation, vegetation control of exotic plant species, mitigation of soil erosion, and planting native flora
- Release request for proposals (RFPs) for specific invasive projects and complete SEQR approval
- Recruit, train, and supervise natural resource stewards, high school interns, and volunteers
- Oversee deer browse survey, vegetation monitoring, and help outside collaborators conduct research
- Develop and manage collaborative opportunities with local schools to advance stewardship goals and promote the Preserve as a learning environment
- Coordinate with other Preserve staff hayfield mowing and carriage road shoulder management to achieve conservation goals
- Seed collection, propagation and planting of native wildflowers for restoration projects
- Attend and participate in regional invasive species meetings (Lower Hudson PRISM)

Forest Ecologist

June 2014 - April 2016

Prospect Park Alliance

Brooklyn, NY

- Implement planning, surveying, mapping, as well as prioritizing management, restoration, and monitoring of invasive species infestations
- Conduct and supervise vegetation monitoring, including collection of field data, data entry, statistical analyses, and yearly reporting after data collection
- Coordinate, hire, and supervise the natural resource internship program which helps with vegetation monitoring and restoration projects
- Mapping and recording invasive species removal and occurrences
- Trail maintenance and construction
- Organize and oversee frequent volunteer projects & give plant identification tours of the park

Natural Resource Assistant

January 2014 - June 2014

Scenic Hudson

Poughkeepsie, NY

- Assist with stewardship of Scenic Hudson lands through invasive species mapping and control, habitat restoration, ecological inventorying and monitoring
- Implement natural resource projects such as native plant propagation, ecological assessments, GIS database management, and initiating a citizen science program for vernal pool monitoring
- Coordinate and oversee volunteers during volunteer workdays, education programs, and other recreational activities. Prepare site for volunteers and make sure all equipment is prepared for use

Restoration & Invasive Plant Management Intern

June 2013- November 2013

Saguaro National Park

Tucson, AZ

- Work on invasive plant control projects at Saguaro National Park including mapping, manual and chemical control, conduct photo monitoring, and assist with hazardous fuel reduction projects
- Collecting electronic data (using GPS and handheld computer) for the use in ArcGIS
- Assist in park activities including restoration and revegetation of disturbed sites; work with park employees to lead community invasive plant management projects

Student Researcher, SUNY New Paltz: New Paltz, NY

2010- 2013

- Designed and conducted study of the water quality of an anthropogenically effected water system

Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), Maryland Sea Grant: Cambridge, MD

Summer 2012

- Designed, proposed, and carried out research project to understand the mechanism behind the growth of Submersed Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)

Invasive Species Removal Volunteer, Minnewaska State Park: New Paltz, NY

Summer 2011

- Aiding and assisting in the elimination of invasive species from Peterskill State Park
- Lab study: Developed and designed research project of the environmental factors affecting *Microstegium vimineum* growth by modifying soil pH and nutrient conditions

Presentations

- Invited Speaker. April 29, 2019, LGBTQIA+ in Stem, Rainbow Center. Storrs, CT
- DiFalco, S; Hale, D.C.; Morzillo, A.T. 2019. Assessing Homeowner Attitudes towards Roadside Vegetation Management. US-International Association for Landscape Ecology Conference. Poster. Fort Collins, CO
- DiFalco, S; Gurbisz, C., Kemp, W.M. 2013. Effects of Extreme Weather on a Large Submersed Plant Bed in Chesapeake Bay: Field Observations. Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography Conference. Poster. New Orleans, LO
- DiFalco, S; Richardson, DC. 2012. Factors affecting Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) growth. Student Research Symposium. Poster. New Paltz, NY
- DiFalco, S; Richardson, DC. 2011. Spatial and temporal variability of water quality in an anthropogenically affected river, Wallkill River and its tributary, New Paltz, NY. North American Benthological Society Conference. Poster. Providence, RI

Awards and Scholarships

- UConn College of Ag, Health , and Natural Resources Bishop-Carver Scholarship August 2019
- NASA MSU Professional Enhancement Award April 2019
- Eversource Energy Center Graduate Fellowship 2018-2020
- Segal AmeriCorp Education Award November 2013
- Luigi and Anita Traverso Italian Studies Minor Scholarship August 2012
- Quad Graphics Windhover Corporate Scholarship 2009-2012
- Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Recipient Summer 2010
- New York State Scholarship for Academic Excellence 2009-2012

Skills

- Experience with ArcGIS, ArcGIS Online, R Studio, Python, Microsoft Access, and Adobe Photoshop
- Game of Logging, Chainsaw Training Level 1 2018
- NYS Certified Pesticide Technician with 5 years of herbicide experience 2016
- Wilderness First Aid (June 2017) and CPR/AED Certified (June 2018)
- Languages: advanced Italian and basic Spanish

Affiliations

- US-International Association for Landscape Ecology 2019 -Present
- National Geographic Society 2014 -Present