Dear Search Committee,

I am writing to express my interest in the faculty position in natural sciences at Deep Springs College. I am a recent graduate of Michigan Technological University with a Ph.D. in Forest Science. My dissertation studied the movement of carbon from coarse-woody debris into the environment. I extracted fungal genetic material from naturally decaying logs and used real-time PCR to study RNA expression linked to decomposition as well as metabarcoding to study fungal community assemblages. I also worked on a project studying the effects of cessation of a long-term N addition experiment on soil microorganisms. These projects have given me a breadth of experience, both in the field and in the lab.

In the field, I have planned field protocols, conducted forest inventories, performed water quality tests, and collected wood, soil, plant, and insect samples. I have extensive experience with identifying plants and insects, particularly of the Great Lakes states. In the lab, I have experience with genetic material extraction, real-time PCR, metabarcoding, bioinformatics, PLFA/NLFA analysis, insect and plant identification and preservation, and using R for statistics. I worked as a Teaching Assistant for a general forest ecology course for four years and co-taught the course in the fall of 2024. As part of that position as Instructor of Record, I was responsible for two lectures and three lab sections per week, most of which involved field trips to give students hands-on experience.

I have had opportunities to live and work at research stations across the United States over the course of my education. Those chances to live away from a traditional campus or town and instead focus entirely on academics and working with my fellow researchers were invaluable. They shaped my interests, work ethic, and dedication to giving back to others. The mission of Deep Springs is one that resonates deeply with me. My opportunities to research and explore independently as an undergraduate shaped me into the scientist I am today, and I eagerly look forward to opportunities to give today’s undergraduates the same chances I had.

Sincerely,

Eileen Reeves