M.S. Graduate Research Assistant – Elk Survival
Nevada Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Nevada, Reno

Project description and responsibilities: We seek a graduate research assistant (MS student) in wildlife ecology to study the contributions of trace mineral elements and space use on elk survival in Nevada. The research project seeks to understand potential causes of puzzling springtime mortality of elk in northern Nevada that may contribute to population declines. In collaboration with staff at the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), the student will evaluate whether spring mortality is driven by trace mineral deficiencies, novel diseases, space use, and/or landscape-scale factors. The student will be based out of the Nevada Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit (NVCFWRU) at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and will have opportunity to pursue their MS degree through the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences or the Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology programs. The student will be supervised by Dr. Brian Folt at the NVCFWRU at UNR and will be expected to take classes, assist with field work, contribute to annual reports, write a MS thesis, publish at least one peer-reviewed journal article, give presentations to cooperators and at conferences, and enthusiastically participate in various academic communities at UNR, among other duties.

Qualifications: BS in ecology, wildlife biology, or related field. Strong candidates will be interested in population and landscape ecology and possess experience with field research, statistical analysis, and R programming. The ideal candidate is motivated, enthusiastic, creative, collaborative, and productive, with strong oral and written communication skills. We value and support intersectional diversity and work-life balance.

Salary and benefits: Full support including stipend plus tuition waiver and student health benefits for 2+ years. March-May start date preferred (as an NDOW technician); student would begin graduate school in August 2025.

To apply: Please email a cover letter, CV, unofficial transcripts, and contact information for 3 references to Brian Folt (bfolt@unr.edu). Interested applicants are welcomed to reach out with questions via email before applying. We will begin reviewing applications on 1 February 2025 and the position will be open until filled.