

Recruiting applicants for a summer forest ecology field crew based out of UC Davis – Crew Leader

Spend your summer collecting ecological data in the California mountains!

Position: Field Crew Leader in Forest and Fire Ecology

Employment period: Beginning June 15, 2020 and lasting 3-4 months (with some flexibility in the end date)

Compensation: Approximately \$20-21/hour

Field location: Mountains of Northern California (including the Sierra Nevada, Southern Cascades, and North Coast Ranges)

Office location (duty station): Davis, CA (UC Davis)

Job purpose: Lead a four-member field crew to survey vegetation following wildfires that burned approximately five years ago. The crew will establish plots and collect vegetation data, including (a) surveying regenerating vegetation in severely-burned areas and (b) mapping conifer seed sources (surviving trees) surrounding severely-burned areas. The data will support a project that will combine the plot-based data with drone imagery to improve predictions of post-fire forest recovery.

Highlights include:

- The fieldwork will occur across four recent wildfires in northern California, most likely in the north Coast Range, Sierra Nevada (east and west side), and southern Cascades.
- Fieldwork will be split between burned and nearby unburned areas, and the post-fire vegetation (primarily shrubs) in these sites is usually low and relatively easy to move through.
- There are beautiful camping locations near the study sites and great recreational opportunities nearby. Some study sites are in or adjacent to wilderness areas and within short hiking/driving distance of other interesting features like lava flows and hot springs.

Job description: The crew leader is responsible for leading and conducting field sampling, including surveying regenerating vegetation and mapping nearby surviving mature trees. The crew leader will be responsible for the following:

- **Field data collection (80%):** Lead a crew in collecting field data (including data on regenerating vegetation and structure of nearby unburned forest). Perform work alongside the other crew members while ensuring the crew's work meets high quality standards, correctly follows all protocols, and is conducted efficiently.
- **Data and equipment management (15%):** Ensure that equipment and data are managed properly (including quality-checking data sheets, uploading photos, and submitting completed data sheets to the supervisor at regular intervals); perform data entry at an office location, likely using Microsoft Excel.

- **Logistics, travel, and communication (5%):** Lead a crew of four in locating remote field sites using topographic maps, compass, and handheld GPS units; plan and schedule logistics of field travel with the supervisor; make decisions in the field regarding the most efficient allocation of crew time (e.g., determining the order in which to visit study plots to minimize hiking and driving time); communicate crew issues or other problems to the supervisor; conduct regular reporting of field vehicle mileage and ensure vehicle maintenance schedule is followed.

Work location: The duty station will be in Davis, CA. During the work week, crews will primarily be car camping near the project study sites on National Forests. Camping will usually be “dispersed camping” (undeveloped areas that are adjacent to remote roads and have no facilities) but will occasionally be in campsites (with campsite fees paid by employer). Camping location will change frequently as the crew moves to different study areas.

Work schedule: The work schedule will primarily consist of eight 10-hour days (followed by six days off), with some periods of four 10-hour days (followed by three days off). The full summer schedule will be determined at the beginning of the field season with input from all crew members. The supervisor will attempt to accommodate the scheduling preferences of the crew, but crew members (and the crew leader) must be flexible with respect to the work schedule. Field campaigns will begin and end at the duty station in Davis, CA.

Transportation: The crew will be provided with a vehicle. The crew leader’s ability and willingness to contribute to the driving duties would be viewed favorably. Travel to field sites will require highway driving as well as driving on rough, remote, poorly-signed backcountry roads.

Equipment and gear: All necessary field equipment will be provided. Communal camping gear (e.g., water jugs and cooking gear) will also be provided. The crew leader and members will be responsible for their own personal camping gear and field clothing.

Training: Training in field methods, equipment, and safety will be provided. Valid wilderness first aid (or more advanced) certification, or willingness to complete certification training (registration costs will be covered by the employer) required.

Work conditions/physical demands: Crew leader and members must be in good physical condition. Field conditions will often be hot, sometimes with little shade, but can also be very cold and potentially wet. Work will require hiking up to 10 miles per day with a pack through sometimes difficult and steep terrain, usually without trails, often in areas burned by wildfire, and sometimes with dense and/or thorny shrub cover. Work will involve camping, often with no facilities, and possibly occasionally away from vehicles. Work requires careful, legible handwriting and careful attention to detail (e.g., decimal places, species identities).

Minimum qualifications:

- Theoretical background in ecology, forestry, or related natural science field, or equivalent experience/training

- Excellent organizational skills for logistical planning, data management, crew management, and equipment management
- Ability to take a leadership role and make executive decisions when needed
- Skilled in identifying California trees and shrubs
- Experience in vegetation data collection
- Skilled in navigating on- and off-trail using topographic maps, compass, and handheld GPS units
- Experience camping in remote locations with no facilities
- CPR and Wilderness First Aid certified (certification may be accomplished after job offer is made, with registration cost paid by the employer)

Preferred qualifications:

- Ability to identify California plants to the species level using a dichotomous key
- Ability to maintain a positive attitude in physically demanding and/or uncomfortable conditions
- Experience working with complex data recording equipment
- Enthusiasm for the type of work to be conducted
- Valid driver's license; willingness to share driving responsibilities
- Experience operating a vehicle on rough roads

Application due date: Feb. 3, 2020

To apply: Send a cover letter, CV/resume, and contact information for three references (including name, organization, phone, email, and relationship to you) to Derek Young at djyoung@ucdavis.edu using the subject line "Field Crew Leader Application." Please combine all application materials into one PDF for submission.

Applicants will be notified if they have been selected for an interview by February 12, 2020.

Thank you for your interest!