Multiple Field Research Assistantships Available for Summer 2016
Prescribed fire effects in pine barrens restoration
Department of Forestry, Michigan State University
and USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station

Position description: The Department of Forestry at Michigan State University, in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, is seeking three highly motivated seasonal research technicians for Summer 2016 to assist with a project investigating soil heating processes and the effects of soil heating on soil carbon, nutrients, seedbanks and hardwood regeneration in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Two technicians will be key assistants in vegetation, soil and fuels field measurements and sampling near Ashland, WI, and the third technician will be responsible for maintaining a seed germination study near Rhinelander, WI. However, all technicians will participate in field and greenhouse responsibilities during periods of high activity. The research technicians will be supervised by the Project Manager (Dr. Paulo Pereira) and will be responsible for performing all measurements and sampling related to the project. Opportunity will exist for highly motivated personnel to pursue mentored independent research related to the overall project goals. The abstract for the project is available here: http://www.firescience.gov/JFSP_advanced_search_results_detail.cfm?jdbid=%24%26J3%3CW%0A

Qualifications: The successful applicants will have the following knowledge, skills and abilities: 1) previous field experience as a field and/or research technician in one or more of the following areas: soil sampling and/or analysis, ecological monitoring, vegetation identification and measurement, fuel inventories, or similar; 2) strong organization and communication skills; 3) demonstrated ability to work well independently and in a team environment; 4) demonstrated commitment to completing work with a high level of initiative, skill and professionalism; 5) a high aptitude for outdoor physical activity; and 6) ability to operate field vehicles and possession of a valid US driver’s license. We desire at least one technician to have experience in plant identification in the upper Lake States region.

Working conditions: These positions will be largely field-based or greenhouse-based, although work in a sample processing lab will occasionally be required. Field conditions may include exposure to inclement weather, full sun, biting insects, and poison ivy. Responsibilities will require walking over uneven terrain; lifting and carrying field packs weighing up to 40 lb.; bending, squatting, kneeling, sitting or standing for prolonged periods of time; operating measurement or sampling equipment with a strong level of fine motor skills; and performing repetitive tasks with a high level of precision and accuracy. A minor component of work will include periodic assistance with brush piling and removal for fuel manipulations (operating hand saws or brush cutters; dragging and piling brush). Personal protective equipment necessary for performing the position will be provided. Technicians will be responsible for providing their own personal field gear (appropriate field clothing, footwear, daypack, etc.).
Salary: Hourly wage commensurate with experience, for 40 hours/week between approximately June 1, 2016 – August 29, 2016. We may be able to accommodate earlier or later start & end dates with advance notification (please specify any start/end date requests in your cover letter).

Location: The field positions will be based near Ashland, WI. The greenhouse is located near Rhinelander, WI. Shared housing will be provided during the field season. Occasional overnight travel may be required to perform laboratory and greenhouse measurements in Grand Rapids, MN or Rhinelander, WI.

To Apply: Applicants should email as a single PDF: 1) a letter of interest detailing your qualifications for the position and the dates of your availability, 2) resume/CV with list of relevant coursework, and 3) a list of three professional references with contact information (institution, email address, phone number), to Dr. Paulo Pereira at dasilva5@msu.edu. Please name your file as: LastnameFirstname_Application_YYYYMMDD.

Application deadline: Applications will be considered on a rolling basis beginning February 15, 2016 so you are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

For more information: Contact Dr. Paulo Pereira at dasilva5@msu.edu or Dr. Jessica Miesel at mieselje@msu.edu.