

2024 Conservation Connect Fellowship Practicum Projects

Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
<p>1. Partnerships on Every Forest: Empowering communities through building effective partnerships</p>	<p>The National Forest Foundation (NFF) seeks a fellow to support the Partnerships on Every Forest (PEF) program. In this program we work with Forest Service units throughout the country to support the growth of partnerships with community groups, nonprofit organizations, state and federal agencies, and Tribes. This is done through conducting partnership assessments and case studies to better understand how the Forest Service can incorporate the needs, interests, and values of local communities and create mutually beneficial relationships. Focus areas for assessments may include diversity, equity, and inclusion; wildfire adaptation; recreation; and more! The fellow will assist with partnership assessment and case studies which will include conducting interviews with Forest Service staff and partners, qualitative data analysis, report writing, and creation of other deliverables as needed.</p>	<p>Deliverables will likely include reports or case studies on partnership work for a specific forest(s). These deliverables will help Forest Service staff build partnership strategies that incorporate the needs, interests, and values of local communities and create mutually beneficial relationships.</p>	<p>The ideal candidate will have experience in qualitative research, including conducting structured interviews, coding and analyzing interview notes, and writing summaries and reports. They will also be comfortable conducting interviews both virtually and in person. The candidate must have an interest in community engagement in public land management.</p>	<p>Flexible depending on fellow's schedule.</p>	<p>Remote with potential for travel opportunities.</p>



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
2. Empowering the next generation of conservation leaders: Mission Mountains Youth Crew coordination	The NFF seeks a fellow to provide administrative and coordination support for the Mission Mountains Youth Crew Program (MMYC) , a summer job program for youth living on the Flathead Reservation in Montana. Project work will include coordinating activities with program leads, supporting crew leads, being a point of contact for crew and program leads in the field, supporting the end-of-program celebration, and potentially assisting the crew with data collection. The program runs for 8 weeks over the summer (June - August). There could be an opportunity for hours outside of this window, including meeting organization/notetaking and grant writing/reporting, depending on applicant's interests and skills.	A smooth-running 8-week program. There could also be an opportunity to work with program leads to create a work plan or method for capturing program metrics for reporting and tracking purposes.	The ideal candidate will have strong interpersonal and organization skills and interest in and experience with working with diverse audiences. Program and/or meeting coordination experience is a plus.	Most of the project work will be concentrated over the summer months (June - August), with some hours during the academic year as schedules allow.	This fellow must be based out of Missoula, Flathead Valley, Swan Valley, or Kalispell area in Montana for the summer.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
3. Reimagined visitor experience: Creating a modern Visitor Center that showcases Midewin's unique history	The National Forest Foundation (NFF) and US Forest Service seek a fellow to serve as the project manager of a collaborative team working to redesign the Welcome Center at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The current exhibit was designed in 1999-2003 and has not been updated to reflect the modern visitor experience. The fellow will coordinate a team of Midewin staff to highlight the extensive and unique history of this piece of land, including Native American history, Euro-American settlement and agriculture, Army ammunition plant, the native prairie restoration, and most recently the enhancement of recreational amenities. By engaging with the NFF, Midewin staff, and stakeholders, the fellow will identify ways to bring this history to life through storytelling, interactive experiences, and updated exhibit features. By updating the information and how it is presented to the public, the fellow will directly contribute to the NFF and USFS goal of increasing engagement with current and future visitors.	The fellow will conduct front-end evaluations of visitors in the form of surveys. They will engage and interview several stakeholders, including the Midewin staff, the USFS Regional Office, Purdue University graduate students (currently working on a recreational design plan), Midewin Interpretive Association, Midewin Historical Society, Chicago Field Museum, and Bold Bison Marketing Consultants, to name a few. They will research and visit other Welcome Centers to gather ideas and see how other institutions present their information. They will coordinate team meetings, create a project timeline in the form of a Gantt chart, and help identify Midewin's exhibit "big idea" along with an exhibit brief to support it.	The candidate should have strong project management, writing, and interpersonal skills, with an interest in working collaboratively with a team of Midewin Forest Service staff. The preferred candidate can think creatively and has an interest in educating and connecting visitors to their public lands. Graphic design, museum exhibit studies, and/or environmental studies are a plus.	Most of the project work will be concentrated over the summer months (June - August), with some hours during the academic year as schedules allow.	Chicagoland area. While most work will be conducted remotely, the fellow will be required to visit Midewin several times throughout the project to meet with all collaborating partners.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
4. Sustaining healthy National Forests in North Carolina: Telling the story	The National Forests in North Carolina seeks a fellow to assist in the storytelling of the robust, dynamic, and multifaceted programs and projects that span from the mountains to the sea of North Carolina. This storytelling would focus on internal and external outreach and communication materials, including StoryMaps focusing on explaining, highlighting, and demonstrating the ongoing ecological restoration efforts. The fellow additionally will coordinate with the Southern Appalachian Subregion to tie these stories and efforts into a larger Southern Appalachian Resiliency Initiative.	StoryMaps and other communication tools.	Candidates should possess GIS skills with the ability to manipulate and manage spatial information and create maps and StoryMaps; proficiency in Microsoft Office products; education in public affairs, communication or hydrology, ecology, climate science or natural resources such that there is a base language to communicate using ecological concepts; strong communication skills for clear writing and speaking; the ability to research and read technical information; the ability to manage and develop social media platforms; the ability to communicate with diverse partners; the ability to work closely with a team of individuals who are working across multiple office locations; and the ability to work independently toward long-term goals after regular check-ins on short-term needs and overall progress.	Summer 2024 and/or throughout the academic year	Remote, with preference given to candidates who are located within the region.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
5. Southern Appalachian Subregion Resiliency Initiative: Telling the story	Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest (Georgia), the National Forests in North Carolina, the Cherokee National Forest (Tennessee), and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests (largely Virginia and portions of West Virginia and Kentucky) now comprise the Southern Appalachian Subregion (SAS). Tackling all-lands, large-landscape, and collaborative watershed efforts to prepare for climate change impacts is the number one priority of the SAS. This effort is growing into a larger Resiliency Initiative inclusive of vegetation management, recreation, and access to National Forest System lands within the SAS. The fellow will assist the SAS in developing communication tools and StoryMaps for audiences internal and external to the agency to tell the story of subregional efforts, including work planned now, future efforts, and the nexus of critical partnerships. These communication tools will focus on Forest efforts and the connection to the larger subregional Resiliency Initiative.	StoryMaps and other communication tools.	Candidates should possess GIS skills with the ability to manipulate and manage spatial information and create maps and StoryMaps; proficiency in Microsoft Office products; education in public affairs, communication or hydrology, ecology, climate science or natural resources such that there is a base language to communicate using ecological concepts; strong communication skills for clear writing and speaking; the ability to research and read technical information; the ability to manage and develop social media platforms; the ability to communicate with diverse partners; the ability to work closely with a team of individuals who are working across multiple office locations; and the ability to work independently toward long-term goals after regular check-ins on short-term needs and overall progress.	Summer 2024 and/or throughout the academic year	Remote, with preference given to candidates who are located within the region.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
6. Rare and invasive plant species ecology: A background study for Blumer's dock reintroduction in a post-invasive-treatment environment	The NFF and US Forest Service are working together to combat multiple invasive species that threaten unique habitats across Tonto National Forest. In addition to treating invasive species, this project aims to reintroduce priority native species to treated areas. The Invasive Species Fellow will produce a feasibility study for reintroduction of Blumer's dock in post-treatment areas and will have the opportunity for a field visit with the botany crew to do recon work. The fellow will work collaboratively with NFF staff, partners (e.g., US Forest Service, Desert Botanical Garden, Flagstaff Arboretum, Sonoran Desert Museum), and contracted background study team to inform when to collect seed, how much is needed to establish a population, and when to seed/plant; research other techniques for establishing rhizomatous species (<i>Rumex</i> spp); synthesize existing info on <i>Rumex</i> seeding, propagation, and reintroduction; summarize how long it would take for cultivated individuals to be outplanted; develop a monitoring design and implementation timeline; and gather existing data on locations for reintroduction.	The fellow will deliver a Feasibility Study Report on best practices for reintroduction of Blumer's dock with considerations for post-herbicide and mechanical removal of invasive species. This study will include but is not limited to a literature review, consultation with relevant authorities on best management practices (BMPs), and coordination with the NFF and contracted Background Study team.	The candidate should have proficiency in report writing; a background in biology, ecology, conservation, or related field; experience with logistics planning; and knowledge of database queries. GIS skills not required but preferred.	This fellow would ideally start in May/June 2024 and complete their work before March 2025. Concentrated periods of project work are flexible within that timeframe to suit the fellow's schedule.	Virtual/hybrid in Northern AZ. Although the feasibility study and partner coordination can be done completely virtually, the ideal candidate will have some in-person availability.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
7. New Mexico Wood for Life initiative: Partnership building and coordination for long-term benefits	The primary focus of this project is supporting the expansion of a new partnership between the Navajo, Pueblo, and Apache Tribes; Land Grant Communities; US Forest Service; and NFF, focused on connecting wood from restoration projects with communities in need of firewood (more info here). Through this project, the fellow will assist in coordination of the core team, coordinate with Forest Service staff on available units for fuelwood initiatives, develop outreach materials for interested participants, conduct stakeholder analyses and interviews, and develop a short report and/or map summarizing findings and any recommendations. Other stakeholder engagement opportunities exist for the fellow to work on if more hours are needed.	Short report and/or map summarizing findings and any recommendations with relevant presentations to NFF staff.	The ideal candidate will be proficient in Microsoft Access, have experience report writing, and possess excellent communication skills, cultural sensitivity, and attention to detail. Familiarity with GIS is a plus but not required. Familiarity with the New Mexico cultural landscape is extremely valuable.	Summer 2024 and into Fall 2024	New Mexico (remote or hybrid considered)



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
8. Where's the Water? Visualizing NFF's Water Initiatives within the Colorado River Basin and Beyond	The Conservation Connect Water Fellow will focus on improving NFF's visual communications and information related to water-related initiatives, including payment for watershed services projects, low-tech process-based restoration projects, and water replenishment projects. The objective will be to define how NFF can display the breadth of project-related activities using ArcGIS tools to enhance mapping and visual storytelling, with the output displayed on the NFF website's Watershed Services section (to be created). The fellow will support the development of the mapping product and populate it with the projects in the Colorado River Basin Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) project portfolio. The output will underpin the redevelopment of the Watershed Services section of the NFF website, to which the Fellow will also contribute in terms of general design ideas and other forms of digital content.	Comprehensive ArcGIS Map or StoryMap illustrating NFF's water projects, their statuses (i.e., idea, in progress, completed), their water benefits or ecosystem service benefits, and funding opportunities.	Candidates should be familiar with ArcPro, StoryMapping and general concepts of storytelling, have a basic environmental background or interest, and possess strong interpersonal skills and attention to detail.	May 1 - November 1, 2024 (flexible within this timeframe)	Remote, though fellows in the Colorado River Basin will have the opportunity to attend in-person meetings and events.



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
9. Understanding and Supporting Diversity of NFF Funding Recipients	This fellow will assist the Conservation Awards team develop further insight into the diversity of its current grantees and contractors, and contribute to the creation of a database for this information as well as systems and processes. Pertinent information includes grantee and contractors' areas of expertise, where they work, and select demographic information as relevant. This information is critical for the NFF to make sure its invited grant and contract opportunities reach relevant and diverse potential recipients. The selected candidate will work to gain information from staff in different NFF programs to assess current processes of soliciting grantees and contractors, analyze results, and make recommendations as well as create and administer survey(s) of external partners that would support tracking metrics on their expertise and diversity.	Survey and interview results, analyzed in a report with recommendations for further action, and data incorporated into organizational database.	The preferred candidate will have experience in systems thinking, research/analysis, organizational development, and databases or data management.	Flexible with some work expected throughout the year	Remote



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
10. Inclusive and Accessible Communications around NFF Grant Opportunities	This practicum is focused on helping NFF increase the reach of its nationwide competitive grant programs. Strategic and inclusive marketing of these opportunities supports the program objectives of increasing the diversity of applicant pools and accessibility of the grant program. Project work will include research on and outreach to potential grantees; creation or revamp of a communications strategy for multiple grant programs; creation of blog or social media posts highlighting program accomplishments or grantee organizations; and/or an accessible and interactive map on the NFF website showing locations of funded projects and information about the organizations and objectives of each project.	Communications strategy, blog and social post content, tracking of efforts, and/or map on NFF website.	This fellow should possess communications and marketing awareness, excellent writing skills, experience with research and analysis, and familiarity with website content management.	Flexible with some work expected throughout the year	Remote



Project Title	Project Description	Deliverables	Skills Required	Timeframe	Location
11. Visual Storytelling in the Sierra Nevada Region	The Sierra Nevada Visual Storytelling Fellow will improve the National Forest Foundation's communications and storytelling through the creation of short-form video, graphic art, and photo media with the goal of highlighting the scope and scale of work being completed in the region. The fellow will document the conservation efforts of the NFF's Sierra Nevada Program team including capturing and creating video, graphic art, photo and audio assets of on-the-ground project work, partnerships and collaborative efforts, Tribal involvement, and outdoor recreation. The fellow will work in a collaborative fashion with the NFF's communication team and Sierra Nevada field team members to prioritize, plan, and capture important events and accomplishments across the Sierra Nevada Program area. The fellow will bring forward additional story ideas and contribute to the creative direction of content being created.	5+ short videos/montages (.5 to 1.5 Minutes) for NFF social media marketing and communications; 1 short-form video (4-6 minutes) to portray more in-depth themes and stories of key projects; 150 high-quality photo assets showing the diversity of NFF project work and landscapes, with a focus on the Tahoe area; edited b-roll footage (color graded, segmented, and organized by activity); assets organized and saved for future program use; and existing organizational assets identified and curated to contribute to this project.	Applicants should possess cinematography, videography, and photography skills; knowledge of video and photo editing; and experience conducting content interviews. The preferred candidate will also be a licensed drone operator and have an environmental background or interest. Fellow will need to provide reliable transportation and all equipment/software.	Throughout the year, with the majority of hours between May and November.	Applicants should be located in or near the Sierra Nevada Region. Work will be hybrid with significant travel to remote locations across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, including some overnight trips (fellow will be compensated for lodging and mileage).

