

Riparian and Wetland Botanist, fieldwork in northern CA

OVERVIEW

The Institute for Natural Resources (Portland, OR office; <https://www.pdx.edu/inr/institute-natural-resources>) is partnering with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to implement their Riparian and Wetland Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (R&W AIM) strategy, which is targeted at collecting standardized data from wetlands and riparian areas across BLM Districts in the western U.S. Work will focus on sites in northern California. Data collection will follow the AIM National Aquatic Monitoring Framework: Field Protocol for Lentic Riparian and Wetland Systems (TR 1735-3).

We are recruiting a Riparian and Wetland Botanist to participate in a three-person crew that will be based in Portland, OR but working in northern CA. The position is field-based and will require rough camping for 8 days at a time (e.g., away from established campgrounds and infrastructure). Sampling sites may sometimes be near a town, but often the towns will have few amenities or entertainment, and crew members will need to bring enough food and supplies to last the entire hitch. Cell phone service from any carrier (Verizon is usually the best) is poor to non-existent in many areas. Applicants should also understand that this is physically and mentally demanding work. The crew will work eight consecutive ~10-hour days, followed by a 6-day break. They will work in all kinds of weather (including hot temperatures) and with the possibility of fire smoke, and frequently will have to navigate difficult roads before lugging awkward and heavy equipment across uneven terrain to access a site. Crew members may be asked to perform data tasks and attend meetings during 6-day breaks from fieldwork.

Mandatory paid training will occur May 5 through 10 in Carson City, NV. Regular field sampling will begin later in May and will continue into August, and will consist of at least six 80-hour work hitches. Each hitch will run from Wednesday through Wednesday. INR will supply all of the equipment necessary to carry out the work, including vehicle, sampling equipment, waterproof boots, shared camping equipment (i.e., stove and water jug), and fire safety equipment. Crew members are expected to provide personal items, including closed toe hiking boots, backpack for carrying field gear, tent, sleeping bag and pad. Crew members are also responsible for arranging their own housing in between hitches.

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum Qualifications:

- A Bachelor's Degree (or current student) in Botany, Biology, Ecology, Soil Science, Environmental Science, Horticulture, Natural Resources or related subject.
- Ability to identify plants using dichotomous keys and to recognize common taxa such as the sunflower family, pea family, etc.

- Experience following standardized field sampling protocols, including: data entry and management using electronic devices; navigating to and collecting coordinates with hand-held GPS units and other electronic devices; and using Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access).
- Valid driver's license and clean driving record (DUI or other serious convictions need not apply).
- Willingness to spend multiple days camping in the field where hazards (snakes, bears, deadfall, lightning, poison oak, flash floods, fires, smoke, etc.) may be encountered.
- Willingness to work irregular hours in harsh environments and challenging weather, and carry 40-50 pounds in a backpack over uneven terrain.
- Demonstrated ability to work productively as part of a team to accomplish mutual goals, and to work independently as required.

Preferred Qualifications:

Studies have shown that women and minorities often don't apply for positions where they don't meet all of the preferred skills and experience. We recognize that there are many different paths, experiences, and diverse backgrounds that add value to one's work, and encourage applicants to apply even if they do not have all of the preferred skills.

- Two seasons of botany field data collection, and at least one season supervising others in related tasks.
- Coursework in Plant Taxonomy and/or Systematics with additional training in wetland/riparian plant identification. Herbarium experience may substitute for coursework.
- Knowledge of wetland flora of northern California, including ferns, graminoids, forbs, and woody plants.
- Experience preparing voucher and herbarium specimens.
- Experience characterizing wetland and aquatic habitats in the field using standardized protocols, including Cowardian wetland classifications, hydric soil indicators, and riparian vegetation.
- Experience driving and maintaining 4WD trucks, especially in off-road situations.
- CPR and/or Wilderness First Aid certification. (INR can reimburse the cost of courses.)

EXPECTATIONS

In addition to the above qualifications, we expect crew members to commit to the entire field season, to practice safety awareness, including vehicle safety procedures, to communicate regularly with INR support staff and BLM agency staff, to participate in INR and BLM trainings, and to contribute to building a healthy and fun work team environment.

TRAINING

This position is ideal for people who are committed to ongoing learning and development and who are interested in a career in wetlands. You will receive paid training on the AIM protocols and associated methodology. You will also have the opportunity to interact with seasoned staff scientists from both the BLM and INR. Mandatory training (for all crew members) on the R&W AIM protocol will occur May 5-10 in Carson City, NV.

COMPENSATION

Salary is based on qualifications and experience. The starting salary is \$23.45 an hour. You will also receive a total of \$480 per diem for food costs per hitch and lodging reimbursement of up to \$175 per hitch (e.g., for camping at established campgrounds). We will also cover per diem, including two travel days, associated with training.

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit the following as a single email attachment to Kyla Zaret (R&W AIM Crew Manager at INR, kzaretATpdx.edu).

1. Letter of interest. Please describe your background, including any volunteer and/or military service, professional experience, recreational interests or hobbies that help demonstrate your suitability for work in harsh and challenging conditions; and your reasons for pursuing this opportunity and how it ties into your long-term career goals.
2. Resume including all degrees and related coursework.
3. Names of three (3) references.

Application review will begin immediately, but we will not start interviewing candidates until January 2025.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about the Institute for Natural Resources can be found on our website at <https://www.pdx.edu/inr/institute-natural-resources>. Additional information on the AIM strategy, including the protocols, can be found at <https://www.blm.gov/aim>.