

Date Opened: 4/07/06

Announcement Number: WERC 42-06-01

Date Closed: 4/14/06

Job Announcement

U.S. Geological Survey

Equal Opportunity Employer

Temporary Position: Biological Science Technician, GG-0404-05
Salary: \$28,349 yearly, \$13.58 hourly actual salary based on hours worked
Type of Appt: Temporary, Not-to-Exceed 180 working days
Work Schedule: Full Time, Up to 4 positions needed
Field Station: USGS, Biological Resources Division, Las Vegas Field Station
Duty Station: Henderson, Nevada

Approximate start date and duration of employment: May 1- December 2006.

Based in Henderson, Nevada field sites include: eastern Sierra Nevada, remote areas of the north rim of the Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, wildlands in southern Utah, southern California and central Nevada.

The biological science technicians that join our research team will have the opportunity to participate in projects that focus on fire ecology and invasive plant species. Recently, both policy makers and research scientists have placed greater emphasis on programs dedicated to understanding both short and long term effects of these ecological phenomena. This increased interest results in a growing need for botanists and field biologists to help gather the data essential to answering important questions about how our environment functions.

The research questions of our team include: Do plant invasions alter the fundamental structure and function of the ecosystem? What are the mechanisms of invasion and how does invasion affect native plant communities? Is there a relationship between fire and invasive plant species? What happens to seed banks and plant communities after catastrophic wildfires? Are there thresholds of ecological change, if so what are they? Are there indicators that may provide insight as to what communities are at risk? Are the management treatments currently in use by federal and private land managers the best practices to use? How do fuel and fire treatments affect fire behavior and intensity? What are the effects of fuel treatments or altered fire regimes on plant populations, communities and landscapes? What are the most effective ecological and economic actions for restoration or preservation of wildlands?

If you apply for this position, you will participate in developing a greater understanding of factors that are shaping the ecology of the Western United States.

The technician position primarily involves data collection and processing (plants and soil seed bank) in diverse and complex regions (see above). Individuals with knowledge of plants native to the Colorado Plateau, Mojave and Great Basin Deserts and ability to efficiently and effectively use a taxonomic key are preferred. Specific duties include: establish sampling sites, assist in data collection (soil sampling, vegetation inventory and monitoring, biomass collection, species identification, preparing herbarium specimens), data management, maintenance of field, laboratory and computer equipment, and occasional library research. The incumbent will collect and organize field data, ensuring adequate quality control of data collected. The incumbent may also assist in the application of experimental treatments in the field including fire, herbicide, fertilizer, grazing, mechanical, and ecological restoration treatments. Some research projects focus on fire and fire effects so applicants may have the opportunity to participate in wildland fire training in the spring and may take part in fire behavior and temperature monitoring. Generally, the work may be arduous including carrying rebar up steep slopes and setting up plots or

transporting soil samples (20-50 lbs) from the collection sites, potentially miles, to vehicles. The work involves large amounts of time outside under a variety of conditions including high elevations and extreme heat and cold. Periods of several days (7-14) will be spent camping at remote locations (approx travel/camping time March-August 85 %). The use of global positioning systems (GPS units), computers, cameras, and on- and off-road vehicles are an essential part of the job.

Links to the following web sites provide detailed descriptions of some of our projects.

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/fire/lv/fireandinvasives/>

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/fire/lv/pj/lakemead/>

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/fire/lv/postfireseeding/greatbasin/>

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/invasivespecies/mojavegrassfire.html>

THIS IS A TEMPORARY EXCEPTED SERVICE POSITION for which all qualified applicants, with or without Federal status may apply and be considered. Appointment to this position will not convey permanent status in the Federal service. Appointment will only be for the duration of the position, approximately 180 days. Temporary employees are covered by the Social Security Retirement system; annual and sick leave will be accrued; employees are ineligible for health and life insurance coverage.

Duties: Incumbent performs technical work in a laboratory or field environment in support of professional or technical employees engaged in data collection activities or analysis of biological data collection activities or analysis of biological samples. Performs one or more of the following duties:

Collects biological, botany, fisheries, or wildlife data from study files or monitoring stations.

Performs laboratory analysis of biological samples to determine specific chemical, biological, or physical characteristics.

Operates a government motor vehicle or a boat as an incidental driver.

Physical Demands: Work is physically demanding and includes walking, bending, climbing and lifting of equipment up to 50 pounds when in the field, sometimes during adverse conditions.

Qualifications: 9 months specialized experience in a field survey party, or 3 years sub professional experience, or 3 years college study (equivalent 90 semester/135 quarter hours) plus 3 months of lab or field work experience.

Basis of Evaluation: All applicants will be evaluated on the basis of education and experience (including unpaid or volunteer experience). Applicants must meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements by the closing date of this announcement.

Note: Applicants will receive a basic eligible or ineligible rating based upon the qualification requirements. First preference in referral will be given to eligible applicants entitled to 10 point veterans preference who have a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more. All other qualified applicants entitled to veteran's preference will be given preference over qualified applicants not entitled to veteran's preference.

All applicants must be United States citizens. Under regulations contained in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, employment in this position is limited to those persons who are authorized to work in the United States. Verification of employment eligibility will be required at the time of appointment.

As a condition of employment, all new employees reporting for duty will be paid through direct deposit to a financial institution of their choice.

Applicants selected for Federal employment will be required to complete a Declaration of Federal Employment, OF-306, prior to being appointed to determine their suitability for Federal employment and to authorize a background investigation. Failure to answer all questions truthfully and completely or providing false statements on the application may be grounds for not hiring the applicant, or for firing the applicant after he/she begins work. Also, he/she may be punished by fine or imprisonment (U.S. code, Title 18, section 1001).

Prior to or at the time of appointment, male applicants born after December 31, 1959 will have to certify that they have registered with the Selective Service system in order to be appointed to a position with the USGS, unless legally qualified for an exception.

Employees of the USGS are subject to the provisions of Title 43, U.S. code, Section 31 (a) and may not according to this legislation and related regulation: (A) have any personal or private interest, direct or indirect, in lands or mineral wealth of such lands or a region under survey and whose title is in the U.S.; (B) execute surveys or examination for private parties or corporations; or (C) have personal or private interest, direct or indirect, in any private mining or mineral enterprise doing business in the U.S. except where specifically authorized by the director of the USGS.

How to Apply: Carefully read all information and instructions. It is the responsibility of the applicant to insure the application is completed. The personnel office will not be responsible for soliciting additional information from applicants or from official personnel records, but will consider individuals based on their applications as submitted. Applications must be received by the closing date of the announcement to be considered.

Submit one of the following forms of application: (a) resume or (b) OF-612, Optional Application for Federal employments, or (c) other written format. Also, please submit college transcript or list of college courses, specifying title of course work, completion date, semester or quarter hours earned by course title, and grade earned.

If claiming 5 point veterans preference, a DD-214 showing character of discharge is required. If claiming 10 point veterans preference, a SF-15 with proof of claim is required.

The USGS is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Selection for this position will be based solely on merit, fitness, and qualifications without regard to race, sex, color, religion, age, marital status, national origin, non-disqualifying handicap conditions, sexual orientation, or any other non-merit factors.

APPLY TO: Peggy Hamilton, USGS/BRD, 3020 State University Dr East, Room 3006, Sacramento, CA 95819, FAX (916) 278-9475 Please list the WERC announcement number on your resume