

Great Lakes Science Center

Lake Michigan Ecological Research Station

1574 N 300 E

Chesterton, Indiana 46304

**Employment Opportunity**

**Position: Several Biological Technicians under a Student Services Contract, approximately** **$18.03-$24.99 per hour depending upon education/experience level, must be US citizen and must be a student, or have been a student within one year (365 days) of the start of the contract.**

**Term: Variable within April – September 2022.**

**Location: U.S. Geological Survey, Lake Michigan Ecological Research Station, 1574 N 300 E, Chesterton, Indiana 46304**

**Application: Candidates must be US citizens and should email a cover letter describing their qualifications, a resume, and a copy of their college transcripts (unofficial is fine) to: Dr. Noel Pavlovic (terrestrial research); Email:** **npavlovic@usgs.gov** **or Kasia Przybyla-Kelly (aquatic research**); Email: kprzybyla-kelly@usgs.gov**.**

**Description of duties and responsibilities: note two types of positions (terrestrial and aquatic) are listed**

**I. Terrestrial research:** Available positions include work in terrestrial systems with animals and plants. Two or three positions are expected to be available for 2022 supporting ongoing terrestrial research.

1. Duties: Field work will assist two areas activities supporting ongoing research projects; 1) vegetation sampling, plant identification and weevil (insect) identification or 2) pollinator research that includes bee sampling and determination of bee habitat use. Vegetation sampling includes participating in a long-term monitoring program for the federally threatened Pitcher’s thistle (*Cirsium* *pitcheri*) and of its seed predators, theinvasive weevils *Larinus*, *Cleonus* and *Rhynocyllus*. Vegetation sampling may also include sampling impacts of beech bark disease on groundlayer vegetation of beech dominated forests or dune vegetation sampling for assessing human impacts and for vegetation mapping validation. Pollinator work will involve collecting bees from sampling sites across the fragmented landscape of the Indiana Dunes National Park and determining habitat use patterns of native bees. Laboratory work may include assisting in processing plant, flower, bee and soil samples for DNA extraction and genomic analyses. Office work will involve data entry and quality control, processing data, statistical analysis and GIS software, and guided data analyses for use in scientific presentations, reports, and peer-review articles. The incumbent must be able to work well in a team environment, have experience and interest in sampling and recording vegetation composition, and pollinator distribution and behavior, and be familiar with data entry and summarization using at least some of the following programs: ArcGIS, Excel, Python, and the R statistical environment. Some travel to remote sites at Sleeping Bear Dunes and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshores may be available.

2. Physical demands: Candidates must be physically able to work full days in coastal dune environments coping with often extremely hot and humid weather and areas that can be infested with ticks, mosquitos, chiggers, poison ivy, and various irritating plants. Such environments often have steep slopes of loose sand and gravel that require physical fitness to navigate. Field workers should always keep hydrated to avoid heat exhaustion or worse. Applicant should have a valid driver’s license.

3. Qualifications: General field survey experience (6 months), OR college work related to field of employment, including one semester of post-high school education from an accredited college, junior college, or technical institute, which included at least 6 semester/14 quarter hours of coursework in biological, chemical, or physical sciences, engineering, or any branch of mathematics. Students are required to document educational status by submitting a copy of their transcript.

**II. Aquatic research:** Research projects in aquatic sciences include nuisance algae, native and invasive fish species, macroinvertebrate restoration, and environmental microbiology. One to two positions are anticipated during summer 2022.

1. Duties: Persons hired are expected to work independently and in group-directed research with minimum supervision. Field work will consist of sample collection (e.g., water, soil/sediment, sand, algae, invertebrates, and fish) in a variety of freshwater environments. Sampling will occur along the Lake Michigan shore and tributaries, mainly in Illinois and Indiana, so candidates should be comfortable in and around water. Work on a multi-lake project will include travel around the Great Lakes basin to study locations and intensive field work aboard a boat. Laboratory work will involve sample processing, species identifications and measurements, and analysis for chemistry, microbiology, and DNA extraction from environmental matrices; the ideal candidate will have familiarity with sterile laboratory techniques, water quality measurements, and handling biological samples and will observe laboratory safety protocols. Personnel will also conduct work in office setting, including data entry, data quality assurance, and some data analysis (preparation of charts, writing field reports, statistical analyses, and assistance with preparation of peer-reviewed manuscripts)
2. Physical demands: Field work is generally performed outdoors in aquatic environments and involves moderate to extreme exposure to the discomforts of rain, cold/hot weather, and waves; field work may include work onboard boats, which can involve slippery surfaces and rocking motions as well as travel by car/truck to study sites, which includes long hours seated in a vehicle.  Special safety precautions are required, and the employee will be required to wear a life jacket and waders for some activities. Applicant should have a valid driver’s license. Laboratory and office work generally involve extended periods of sitting or standing. This position occasionally requires weekend work.
3. Qualifications: General field survey experience (6 months), OR college work related to field of employment, including one semester of post-high school education from an accredited college, junior college, or technical institute, which included at least 6 semester/14 quarter hours of coursework in biological, chemical, or physical sciences, engineering, or any branch of mathematics.

**Working Conditions**

The contractor will receive full safety training and information necessary to work in the field and laboratory, including restrictions related to COVID-19. Insect repellent and safety gear will be provided. This appointment also requires a background check (no cost to candidate). For work performed in the laboratory or office, no special safety gear is required, although the contractor is required to work in clothes suitable for laboratory conditions (no open toed shoes). Lab coats, safety glasses, and gloves will be available. The student will be required to read, understand, and abide by laboratory safety guidelines and job hazard analyses. The office and laboratory are open weekdays; contractors may be asked to telework periodically depending on current COVID-19 restrictions. The office is closed on federal holidays and weekends.

**Compensation**

Student contractors are not considered Federal Employees. The candidate will be hired as an independent contractor and as such will be responsible for payment of all federal, state or local taxes (no deductions will be made by the employer). Once selected, student contractors will be required to obtain a DUNS number and register in SAM (we will provide information about how to do this). The hired student will be issued a 1099 form. The student will typically work 40 hours per week at an hourly rate of approximately $18.03-$24.99 depending on education level and experience. Work is unavailable during Memorial and Independence Day federal holidays. The student does not receive premium pay for work beyond 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week. Time worked on weekends will be compensated at the same hourly rate.

**WE RECOMMEND SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATIONS BY DECEMBER 10, 2021 SINCE REVIEW WILL BEGIN SOON THEREAFTER. HOWEVER, LATER APPLICATIONS MAY BE ACCEPTED DEPENDING ON APPLICANT POOL. Anticipated start dates are mid-May but are negotiable earlier or later depending on need and availability.**