MS Assistantship – Regeneration and Fuel Dynamics after Prescribed Fire

Contact: Mike Saunders, Associate Professor of Hardwood Silviculture (msaunder@purdue.edu; 765-430-1440)

Purdue University’s Department of Forestry and Natural Resources in West Lafayette, Indiana, is seeking applicants for an M.S. assistantship in silviculture starting in August 2019. This project, funded by the McIntire-Stennis Program, is being conducted in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry, the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station and the Department of Defense. Field work is at the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE; www.heeforeststudy.org), a large multidisciplinary research project examining the relationship of silvicultural practices to changes in plant and animal species within forests across Indiana, and at the Naval Surface Warfare Center – Crane Division (NSWC-Crane), a long-term silviculture trial using expanding group shelterwoods and prescribed fire to regenerate oak and increase structural complexity of Central Hardwood oak forests.

Specifically, the successful candidate will investigate regeneration response and fuel dynamics on over 15 sites across HEE and NWSC-Crane that have received prescribed fire between 2-5 years ago. Small-scale, controlled studies of acorn mortality and emergence after prescribed fire would also be part of this project. Additionally, the candidate will assist with overstory data collection at HEE and NWSC-Crane and will help maintain a long-term timber damage study that was installed 2-5 years ago across the two studies.

Department assistantships are awarded at $20,410 per year and include a subsidized insurance plan. The position will be based at Purdue University’s West Lafayette campus. The individual should be comfortable with collecting field data in adverse environmental conditions typical of southern Indiana. Experience with prescribed fire and/or a holding a Red Card is preferred, although not required. All candidates must be U.S. citizens due to security restrictions at NSWC – Crane.

Qualifications:
1. M.S. or B.S. in Forestry, Fire Ecology or closely-related field 2. Minimum GPA of 3.2 3. GRE scores > 50th percentile on verbal and quantitative sections and above 4.0 on the writing section 4. Field work experience, preferably in a research setting 5. Strong oral and written communication skills 6. Possess or quickly obtain a valid driver’s license and have a good driving record 7. Demonstrated technical and scientific writing (i.e., management plans, reports or manuscripts)

Interested individuals should contact Dr. Mike Saunders before submitting a formal application to Purdue’s Graduate School (http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/). Application deadline is January 15, 2019.

Purdue University is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action employer, fully committed to achieving a diverse workforce.