

Position Description
Assistant Professor - Forestry
Blackland Research and Extension, Temple, Texas

Position Description:

Texas A&M AgriLife Research seeks an outstanding, innovative, and dynamic research faculty in Forest Management and Natural Resources Modeling Research at the rank of Assistant Professor. This appointment will be 12 months, non-tenured, 100% Research, and administratively located with Texas A&M AgriLife at the Blackland Research and Extension Center in Temple, Texas. In addition, it will be affiliated with the Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology at Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, and Texas A&M Forest Service, College Station, TX. The applicant will work closely with other scientists within the department, Texas A&M University, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M Forest Service, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to build a highly impactful, externally funded, nationally recognized, and self-sustainable research program that addresses issues facing the forestry sector in Texas related to productivity and sustainability.

Forest resources in Texas are abundant and diverse, covering about 35 percent of the State's land area. According to Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data, there are approximately 60 million acres of forests and woodlands in Texas, with nearly 12 million acres concentrated in East Texas, where the climate is conducive to commercial forestry. The majority of forestlands in Texas are privately owned (~93%), and the rest are owned by the State, national forests, and other public entities. Forests play a crucial role in the well-being of Texas communities, the State, and the planet. Therefore, it is essential to enhance our knowledge and understanding of this domain to guide decisions that impact forest production, stewardship, and the conservation of soil, water, and wildlife resources in Texas.

The successful candidate will be responsible for planning, implementing, and conducting fundamental and translational research on the impact of forest land use, management practices, and climate change on forests and associated production, as well as their effects on soil, water, and other natural resources. Activities will include collecting, analyzing, and organizing forest and natural resources data, algorithms, and models to realistically simulate the behavior of forest ecosystems as they are affected by land use change, forest and associated management, climate, and other factors.

Position Responsibilities:

- Build an externally funded, nationally recognized, self-sustainable research program that addresses issues facing the forestry sector in Texas related to productivity and sustainability.
- Address the researchable issues related to 1) Reforestation and land management to produce crops and timber; 2) Utilization of wood and forest products; 3) Forest and rangeland management to produce forage for domestic animals and wildlife; 4) Forest protection against wildfire, pest and destructive agents; 5) Watershed management and water quality of forest areas; and 6) Forest management for recreation purposes. Each

research experiment/activity will be focused on one or more of the topics listed but will be designed to also evaluate impacts on environmental sustainability including measures of greenhouse gas emissions and soil health parameters.

- Research data, algorithms, and models will be obtained from government, university, and industry sources, including other Blackland/Grassland team members and their collaborators nationwide and worldwide. The candidate will be expected to develop and improve algorithms and models, disseminate findings, train graduate students, and secure external funding.
- Results will be published in peer-reviewed journals and technical reports, and algorithms and models will be shared with stakeholders and the scientific and forest management communities.
- Engage with industry professionals and cooperate in outreach activities relevant to stakeholders.
- Work with the Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Forestry Association, county extension agents, on-campus and other state-wide faculty, and other forestry professionals in the region and participate in activities of relevance to stakeholders.
- Participate in appropriate programming to contribute tangible impacts on the economic viability and competitiveness of the Texas Forestry Sector.

Administrative Relationships:

- Reports directly to the Center Director, Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Blackland, with guidance from the Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology at Texas A&M University, College Station, and Texas A&M Forest Service.
- Directs the work of support staff, and other technical personnel and graduate students assigned to the project.

Qualifications:

Required job qualifications:

- Ph.D. in an area of Forest Science or a closely related field by hire date.
- Experience with forest production and management practices and related activities.
- Strong quantitative skills related to forest management research, including expertise in biometrics, modeling, and geospatial analysis.
- Record of peer-reviewed publications of original research.
- Valid drivers' license/ability to obtain a valid driver's license.

Preferred job qualifications:

- Prior academic, post-doctoral, or professional experience.
- Prior research experience on production forestry.
- Experience working with federal agencies or in other multi-agency collaborative settings.
- Modest teaching experience that will enhance graduate student success.
- Modest outreach experience with stakeholder interaction.
- Grant writing experience and evidence of the ability to attract external funding.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Excellence in verbal and written communication, including a relevant publication record.
- Team-building skills, collaboration capacity, and project management abilities.
- Strong communication skills.
- Highly organized.
- Professional demeanor.
- Ability to multi-task and establish effective working relationships.
- Knowledge and understanding of the mission and role of the Land Grant University System.

Location and Facilities:

This position will be affiliated with the Texas A&M University (TAMU) Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology and contribute to departmental programs. Stationed at the Texas A&M AgriLife Blackland Research and Extension Center in Temple, the proposed faculty member will work with other Blackland faculty and collaborate with USDA-ARS scientists, USDA-NRCS, and Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board staff in Temple. The Blackland Research Center and the collocated USDA-ARS Grassland, Soil, and Water Research Laboratory have a long history of modeling crop and grazing land production and their effects on soil and water resources. The Blackland/Grassland team of agricultural and natural resources scientists anticipate expanding the modeling program with a forest scientist equipped to take the lead in the simulation of forest systems production and environmental impacts from Texas, throughout the United States, and in tropical and arctic environments. The candidate will seek cooperators at all appropriate AgriLife units (especially Texas A&M Forest Service), both in College Station and across the State, as well as with Blackland collaborators in Texas, the United States, and internationally. Collaboration with industry and non-governmental organizations will also be encouraged. These proposed activities will support the missions and strategic plans of Blackland Research and Extension Center and Texas A&M AgriLife Research.

The Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology (ECCB) in College Station, Texas is a nationally ranked program that engages in interdisciplinary research spanning the entire spectrum of ecological levels, from the smallest genetic components to entire ecosystems. Through these efforts, our students, staff, and faculty are dedicated to safeguarding biodiversity, sustaining essential ecosystem services, and preserving our precious natural resources in a changing world. ECCB has 34 faculty, 298 undergraduate and 86 graduate students, and is growing. The Ecology and Conservation Biology program is one of four tracks under the umbrella B.Sc. degree in Ecology and Conservation Biology. The other tracks are Vertebrate Zoology, Ecoinformatics, and the Forest Resources program. The Department is engaged in the campus-wide interdisciplinary programs of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Genetics, and Applied Biodiversity Science Program. The Department houses the Biodiversity and Teaching Collections and S.M. Tracy Herbarium, which are among the top 10 university-based biodiversity collections in the USA. World-class research programs in the department address fundamental questions in ecology, and related areas, at every level of ecological organization from genes to ecosystems, producing knowledge that is immediately applicable to the most

pressing 21st century grand challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, ecological restoration, and integrative approaches to conservation.

Additional information about Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Texas A&M University Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology is available at:

Texas A&M AgriLife Research: <https://agriliferesearch.tamu.edu/>

Texas A&M AgriLife Blackland Research and Extension Center, Temple:
<https://blackland.tamu.edu/>

Texas A&M University Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology:
<https://eccb.tamu.edu/>

Texas A&M Forest Service: <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu>

Application Procedure:

Applications will only be accepted online at

https://tamus.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/AgriLife_Research_External/job/Temple-TX/Assistant-Professor---Forestry_R-074450

Applicants must upload a

- Cover letter (two-page limit)
- Curriculum vitae, including a list of three references and their contact information
- Vision statement of research and service (two-page limit).

The application screening process will begin on August 1, 2024, and the position will remain open until a suitable candidate is identified.

Questions:

Address inquiries to Search Committee Chair: Dr. Gurjinder Baath, Texas A&M AgriLife Blackland Research and Extension Center, Temple, gurjinder.baath@ag.tamu.edu , 254-774-6017

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