Remote Sensing Field Technician, Monarch Butterfly Habitat Monitoring in KY, OH, and IN (2 positions) Remote · Full time

MJV is hiring one team of two field technicians who will work together to study monarch butterfly breeding and migratory habitat on private lands enrolled in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) within the states of KY, OH, and IN.

About Monarch Joint Venture

The Monarch Joint Venture is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving monarch butterflies and their habitats as a flagship for broader environmental conservation benefits.

Description

Position Title: Remote Sensing Field Technician, Monarch Butterfly Habitat Monitoring (2 positions)

Position Status: Seasonal, full-time

Location: KY, southern OH, and southern IN

Project Dates: March 23 – Sept. 18, 2026

Compensation: $18/hr

Priority Application Deadline: January 19, 2026; applications will be reviewed as they are received

Travel required: Yes, extensively throughout the project location (a shared field vehicle, fuel, and lodging costs are covered by the project grant).

Position Summary

Join the growing team of the Monarch Joint Venture, a nonprofit dedicated to conserving the monarch butterfly migration across North America. We are hiring one team of two field technicians who will work together to study monarch butterfly breeding and migratory habitat on private lands enrolled in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) within the states of KY, OH, and IN. Travel, lodging, and field logistics will be managed by the project team, with accommodations varying based on site locations (e.g., field housing, hotels, rental properties).

These are seasonal, full-time positions, approximately 40 hours per week, with the possibility of paid overtime, and benefits as required by law. Qualified candidates must be able to commit to the full term of the monitoring season, drive long distances with their field partner, and live away from home during the project dates. Technicians will travel extensively throughout the study area, primarily conducting drone surveys over monarch butterfly habitat as well as collecting biological data on monarch butterflies and their habitat, including milkweed, and other floral resources using an established monitoring protocol. Opportunities to support outreach events or professional training on monitoring protocols are also expected.

Field technicians will receive **three weeks of paid training starting March 23**, prior to the start of field surveys. This will likely include two weeks of virtual training and independent learning, and a week of in-

person training. **A shared field vehicle, fuel, and lodging costs are covered by the project grant**. Field season lodging will include a combination of field housing and rental accommodations depending upon survey site location, moving among focal areas within KY, OH, and IN. Travel to and from the training and work area at the beginning and end of the field season, food, and additional personal travel costs are the responsibility of the employee. **MJV will cover the cost of registering for a Part 107 training course (Remote Pilot Certification), which is to be completed by April 6 (before the start of the field season).**

Responsibilities

(A) Training and Field Season Preparation (10%)

- General onboarding procedures including organizational operations and safety training.
- Obtain Part 107 certificate and become a licensed drone pilot: practice basic flight maneuvers.
- Learn multiple survey methods (e.g., Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program, pollinator transect surveys).
- Select survey sites and communicate with the landowners regarding the project's objectives and to arrange site visits. Prepare travel schedules.

(B) Conduct monarch and vegetation surveys throughout KY, OH, IN (80%)

Navigate to survey sites to perform remote sensing surveys and field surveys using a standardized protocol. Identify blooming plant species and record their frequency, examine milkweeds for monarch eggs and caterpillars, and count adult monarchs. Specific duties include:

- Field data collection (60%): Conduct field surveys. The majority of surveys will be drone surveys, with a subset of sites requiring in-field sampling, which will involve walking a series of transects at each site and recording milkweed and blooming plants within 1-m^2 quadrats, examining milkweed for monarch eggs and larvae within a 1-ha area, recording adult monarch observations, recording other Lepidoptera and potential pollinators, and deploying and retrieving acoustic recording units (ARUs) for bird monitoring.
- Data and field logistics management (15%): Maintain, organize, and enter field data on tablets/computers throughout the season. Collect and process field management activity records from landowners. Maintain a travel schedule and secure lodging as the season progresses with guidance and direction from the field supervisor. Conduct data proofing and correction to ensure data accuracy. Maintain regular contact with MJV staff and field site contacts.
- End-of-season wrap-up (5%): At least 1 week working remotely at the end of the season (Sept. 13-18), performing end-of-season wrap-up tasks including data entry, review, and analysis.

(C) Train others in remote sensing, Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP) protocols, participate in education and outreach events (5%)

Technicians will train local conservation staff, land managers, and volunteers to conduct standardized monitoring and data entry used in this project. Trainings will include informal field excursions and connecting trainees to MJV's survey protocols for further learning. Participate in public education and outreach events focused on conservation, monarch science, and public lands access.

(D) Additional duties as assigned (5%)

Conduct additional duties related to this field study as the need arises. Tasks may include, but are not limited to, organizing or generating media content and training tools, or preparing data or data collection tools for future use.

Qualifications

Essential Skills:

- Background in environmental science, biology, or related field.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and collaboratively, especially in remote field settings.
- Strong communication skills with the ability to effectively engage with landowners, stakeholders, and team members, including comfort working in rural communities and engaging with landowners.
- Ability to work under physically demanding conditions, including long hours of fieldwork, exposure to direct sunlight, high temperatures, rugged terrain, biting and stinging insects, and thorny or dense vegetation.
- Must be capable of traveling extensively across multiple states, including overnight stays, and managing travel logistics.
- Strong attention to detail for data collection and analysis.
- Interested in communicating scientific findings to a broad audience, including through education and outreach activities.
- Valid driver's license and a safe driving record required.

Desired Skills:

- Experience using remote sensing technology, including UAVs (drones) for data collection. Part 107 certified pilot.
- Experience collecting plant and insect data or implementing other field monitoring protocols.
- Knowledge of milkweed and other plants relevant to pollinator conservation.
- Experience with GIS and navigating with a GPS or compass.
- Coursework or experience identifying plants and insects.

Equal Opportunity Employment

The Monarch Joint Venture (MJV) is an equal opportunity employer. As such, MJV offers equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, gender, religion, age, nationality, social or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, pregnancy, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law. These opportunities include all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, job placement, training, compensation, benefits, discipline, advancement, and termination. All employees are expected to adhere to this policy.

The Monarch Joint Venture is an at-will employer. All persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire.

HOW TO APPLY

You will be asked to submit the following:

1. Your resume (1-2 pages max)
2. Responses to the following prompts (NO COVER LETTERS will be accepted; responses should not exceed five sentences per prompt):

a. *Describe your previous experience identifying plant and/or insect species.*

b. *Summarize your most relevant and significant field research experience, including your role in leading or organizing it if applicable.*

c. *Describe your top two skills, strengths, or attributes relevant to this position, and how they will benefit this project.*

3. The names and contact information for 2 references

What to Expect

Applications will be reviewed and interviews scheduled on a rolling basis. Interviews will be conducted virtually over Zoom, scheduled for 45 minutes with 1-3 MJV staff members. References may be contacted after this interview. While unlikely, a potential short second interview may be requested as needed in final decision making. Ideally, positions will be filled by the end of February, 2026 for a March 23 start date. All candidates will be notified via email if their application is no longer being considered.

Salary

$18 - $18 per hour