

Smithsonian Institution 2026 Internship – Camera Trap Survey in Montana

The Smithsonian Institution's Conservation Biology Institute is seeking 1 intern for a camera trap survey team within grassland ecosystems of northern Montana. This survey is part of an expansion to the large-scale Snapshot USA survey, in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026. Through a “resurvey” of the historic Lewis and Clark Trail with camera traps, the Smithsonian will compare the modern data against wildlife observation records extracted from the expedition’s journals. Since a significant portion of the trail is in Montana, we are creating a team to collect camera trap data in that region on lands belonging to our partner organization, American Prairie. Further information on the Lewis and Clark Resurvey project can be found on the Snapshot USA website: <https://www.snapshot-usa.org/>.

This internship will provide the opportunity to gain skills in leadership, field coordination, and camera trap methodologies. The intern will also gain experience with camera trap data management and equipment organization. The intern will work closely within a team of interns, research ecologists, and other collaborators.

The intern will be expected to operate and live with other interns in remote, field-based settings for 6 months. The intern will need to work in high heat and around biting insects and will also need to navigate difficult road conditions. Flexible scheduling will be required and may include weekends to compensate for weather days. Applicants should be capable of maintaining a positive and professional attitude in difficult field environments.

The internship will take place in north-central Montana. Housing will be provided, but the intern may be requested to occasionally camp in tents. Field equipment, work vehicle, laptop computer, and training will be provided.

Primary responsibilities:

- Create and coordinate field schedules for team.
- Follow and enforce safety protocols.
- Select camera trap locations within assigned areas.
- Deploy and maintain camera trap stations in accordance with protocol.
- Process camera trap data through the online platform: Wildlife Insights.
- Ensure accurate data collection and processing.
- Maintain and organize survey equipment.
- Occasionally assist nearby collaborators with deploying or maintaining their cameras.
- Communicate clearly and regularly with project leaders in Montana and Virginia.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management/Ecology or related fields.
- Interest in mammal ecology, conservation, and management.
- Practical experience deploying trail cameras to detect wildlife.
- Experience processing camera trap data.
- Experience driving in difficult road conditions in remote areas; valid US driver's license.

- Ability to work long days in remote field settings.
- Ability to maintain a positive and professional attitude.
- Applicants must be physically fit and capable of hiking mountainous terrain while carrying a backpack.
- Ability to follow established field protocols.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to live in shared housing with other interns and researchers.
- Wilderness first aid training preferred but not required.

Dates: May 01, 2026 to November 01, 2026

Compensation: \$3,500.00 per month

To Apply: Please send a cover letter, resume/CV, and contact information for references in ONE PDF DOCUMENT to Brigit Rooney at rooneybr@si.edu. Please use the subject line “SI Camera Trap Internship”. The application deadline is February 23, 2026. Late applications will not be considered.