Location: University of Missouri, School of Natural Resources in Columbia, Missouri

Title: Applied Aquatic Ecologist – spatial analyses focused   **Duration:** 1.5 years, full-time

Start date: March preferred, negotiable   **Salary:** $45,000 plus benefits

Application deadline: February 28th, 2024

Description:
The inter-agency Missouri Natural Areas System (https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places/natural-areas) works to protect, conserve, and restore the best remaining natural communities in the state. While designated natural areas account for just 0.2 % of Missouri's lands and waters, populations of 40% of Missouri's species of conservation concern occur on these special places. This position will help to fulfill the mission of the Missouri Natural Areas program to conserve our state's native biodiversity.

This position will conduct applied research while working with the Whittier Lab at the University of Missouri (MU) to produce an aquatic gap analysis for the Missouri Natural Areas System that will incorporate occurrence records for native aquatic crayfish, fish, mussels, and selected macroinvertebrates. Field work is not a component of this position. This gap analysis will utilize the Zonation software package to identify and rank geographic regions of the state that contain distinct aquatic communities or species that are not currently represented within Missouri's Natural Areas network. The resulting analyses will be used by Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) to provide justification and guidance for natural area management.

The selected individual will work closely with MDC biologists using existing datasets to identify aquatic natural community classes that are unprotected, species found in those aquatic classes, and high value aquatic areas that warrant protection. There will be opportunities to develop peer-reviewed manuscripts, attend professional society conferences, and to collaborate with other researchers in the MU School of Natural Resources.

Benefits: This position is eligible for University benefits. The University offers a comprehensive benefits package, including medical, dental and vision plans, retirement, paid time off, and educational fee discounts. For additional information on University benefits, please visit the Faculty & Staff Benefits website at http://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits

Community Information: Columbia, MO, is known as an ideal college town, combining small-town comforts, community spirit and low cost of living with big-city culture, activities, and resources. Home to nationally renowned public schools and other colleges and educational centers, Columbia is packed with restaurants and entertainment venues and hosts more than a dozen annual cultural festivals.

Qualifications:
- Masters in a natural resources or related field; potentially a highly skilled Bachelors in natural resources or related field
- Ability to work independently with multiple agency and academic team members
- Experienced with using and manipulating spatial data – ArcGIS Pro, R
- Proficiency in using MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint

- Demonstrated effective verbal and written communication skills
- High level of organization and self-motivation
- Ability to prepare concise written reports

Duties:
- Summarize spatial datasets representing aquatic species distributions and natural habitat components within study area boundaries in the state of Missouri
- Conduct conservation prioritizations, in cooperation with MDC agency biologists, for aquatic biota using Zonation software
- Regularly develop written reports summarizing findings and provide to MDC
- Draft manuscripts for submission to professional journals
- Present findings at State and Regional professional society meetings

Contact: Dr. Jodi Whittier whittierj@missouri.edu

Apply online by sending a cover letter; a curriculum vitae; unofficial transcripts, and contact information (including telephone numbers and e-mail addresses) for three professional references. Link to online application site for job ID 48685: [Apply here](#)