

## Biological Science Technician Position" Summer 2019

Are you looking for an opportunity to gain field experience in research, ecology, and hydrology in rangeland ecosystems? The Rangeland Resources and Systems Research Unit with USDA-ARS will be hiring a field research technician for the summer of 2019. The position will be based in Fort Collins, CO and involve day trips to the Central Plains Experimental Range in eastern Colorado and overnight trips to the Thunder Basin National Grassland in northeastern Wyoming to collect experimental data. The technician will be working to understand how rangeland management and climate variability/extremes interact to influence water and plant dynamics in semi-arid rangelands.

### MAJOR DUTIES

- Collects vegetation, soil, and sensor data and is responsible for quality assurance/quality control of data collected. Keeps exact, detailed records of experimental data. Provides data in an appropriate format for incorporation into computer spreadsheets. Enters data into computer spreadsheets and performs quality control on entered data. Makes and records observations of unusual happenings, phenomena or trends that might influence interpretation of plot or field data.
- Operates, maintains, cleans, repairs and constructs equipment used in plot and field experiments including, but not limited to, vehicles, experimental precipitation manipulation infrastructure (i.e., rain-out shelters, tanks and pumps), field equipment, and on-site weather stations.
- Manages fieldwork program semi-autonomously; takes responsibility for solving problems and adapting to current conditions and events without constant supervision.
- Ensures that all safety and environmental concerns are addressed to provide a safe work environment, and that activities in support of research do not pose an environmental threat.

### QUALIFICATIONS

- Careful attention to detail when collecting repetitive measurements.
- Comfort with working long hours outdoors, frequently in hot and sunny conditions.
- Ability to do efficient and high-quality work without direct supervision. Ability to proactively solve problems and manage tasks adaptively in order to get the job done on time.
- Positive attitude and sense of humor. Ability to work independently and in teams.
- Skill in the use of personal computers for word processing, data entry and data manipulation in spreadsheets (e.g., Excel).
- Technical knowledge of plant identification, structure and function of plant communities, and theory and practice of rangeland monitoring methods.
- Familiarity with principles of soil science and soil sampling methods.
- Knowledge of the methods used in biological sciences (such as botany, hydrology, range science, soil science, ecology, and chemistry) in order to participate responsibly in most phases of the experimental process.
- Practical knowledge of basic vehicle maintenance and repair. Knowledge of safe operating

procedures for vehicles, hand tools and battery-operated power tools.

#### PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requires standing, walking, bending, and lifting of objects weighing as much as 50 pounds. Certain phases of the work require extended (such as most of a work day) periods of standing or sitting while accomplishing detailed experimental procedures. Some procedures require stamina and endurance. Need to have the physical capability to perform required duties without hazard to self or others.

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

The job is primarily located in remote rangelands of eastern Colorado and northeastern Wyoming. The work environment is about 85% in the field and 15% in the office. The work involves regular and recurring moderate risks or discomforts which require special safety precautions, e.g., working outdoors. Throughout the summer, the incumbent may encounter insects, belligerent livestock, dust, heavy pollen, uncomfortable weeds, and extremes of weather. The incumbent is required to wear protective clothing (e.g., coats, boots, goggles, gloves, and respirator) as conditions warrant.

Dates and Pay: Mid-May to mid-August (start and end dates flexible depending on school calendar). Position is 40 hrs/week starting at \$12.70/hr.

Applications: Please submit a cover letter, resume, unofficial transcripts, and 3 references as soon as possible to David Hoover: [David.Hoover@usda.gov](mailto:David.Hoover@usda.gov) and Lauren Porensky: [Lauren.Porensky@usda.gov](mailto:Lauren.Porensky@usda.gov)

Please include in resume: Major/Minor, Relevant Experience, Relevant Coursework, Technical Skills

Submissions will be reviewed as received until positions are filled. US citizenship is required. USDA/ARS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.