

Where are our graduates working?

Degrees in the Department of Environment and Society are not targeted toward employment in one particular occupation or economic sector. Instead, our students – especially in the Geography and Environmental Studies majors – often develop programs of study designed to take them to innovative and non-traditional careers such as sustainability education, recreation entrepreneurship, or conservation planning. While the College of Natural Resources has traditionally trained students for employment in public land management agencies, our graduates not only work for those agencies but also in local and regional government offices, private consultant firms, private businesses, and all manner of non-profit organizations from advocacy groups to “think tanks” to adult and child education offices.

A Utah State University survey of graduating seniors that offers insight into the future plans of our newest alumni. University-wide, completed surveys were returned from about 50% of students who graduated. In Environment and Society, the surveys found that the vast majority of our graduates (91%) seek jobs immediately after graduation, with about a third also planning to continue their educations. About 60% seek careers in government agencies and 40% in business or industry. Two-thirds will begin their careers in Utah.

Where do they end up? Graduates in Environmental Studies typically find jobs where they can help set the future course of society’s use and protection of environmental resources in legal, educational, advocacy, environmental assessment, and visitor services fields. Graduates in Geography find employment in many of the same fields, but also work as GIS specialists in a wide variety of private sector and government offices and as planners. Geography Teaching majors are prepared for certification as secondary educators, and find work in school districts across Utah and the nation. Recreation Resource Management degrees are specifically designed to prepare students for jobs as state and federal recreation managers and interpretive specialists, but our graduates also work in private businesses and non-profit educational organizations geared toward wildland recreation activities.