United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Pacific Northwest Research Station
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OUTREACH NOTICE

Pacific Northwest Research Station

Research Social Scientist
GS-0101-13/14

Juneau Forestry Sciences Laboratory
11175 Auke Lake Way
Juneau, AK 99801

About the position

The U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station is seeking to hire a Quantitative Research Social Scientist with a duty station in Juneau, Alaska in the near future. The full performance level of this Research Social Scientist is a GS-0101-13/14. A Ph.D. in one of the social science fields (e.g., anthropology, sociology, geography, political science, human dimensions of natural resources) may be preferred.

The Incumbent will reside in the Station's Goods, Services and Values Program and will also work with the USDA Northwest Climate Hub. The mission of the Program is to conduct and communicate research to advance understanding of relationships among people and forest and rangeland ecosystems. The unit conducts interdisciplinary research in five problem areas:

1: Improve knowledge of fundamental social and economic processes and their interactions with the natural environment.

2: Examine the roles of policies, programs, and other institutions in interactions between people and natural resources.

3: Describe and analyze the implications of changing demographics, socioeconomics, and technology on natural resources and their management.

4: Describe the capacity of dynamic landscapes to provide for evolving human wants and needs.

5: Conduct and use integrated multidisciplinary research to support development of management approaches that account for interactions among socioeconomic, ecological, and physical factors.

Program scientists conduct research that is regional (Alaska, Washington, and Oregon), national, and international in scope, and work in partnership with other Forest Service researchers, university scientists, policy makers and managers. The ultimate goal of this research is to improve understanding of the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of government natural resource management policies, decision-making processes, and programs; and to contribute to the scholarly literature and theory about human and natural resource interactions. To achieve these goals, researchers work closely with policymakers, managers, and the public to help them understand a variety of available options

associated with natural resource management and policy decisions, and their implications for people and natural resources. They also work closely with scientists inside and outside the Forest Service, and are active participants in university activities and professional associations.

The areas of research focus for the scientist, while broad, will cover these areas of particular interest to stakeholders in Alaska. Alaska communities are highly dependent on natural resources, with the predominance of federal and Native Corporation lands. Changes in land management policy affect local and regional economies, forest products used within Alaska for subsistence, recreation and tourism, and healthy habitats for salmon and other fish species. Further, there are complex linkages and interactions between resource management at landscape scales, ecosystem function, and the values, goods and services that communities derive from natural resources. Additional complexity is contributed to this coupled human-natural resources system by mixed-ownership landscapes and institutional barriers to natural resource management within federal and state agencies and Alaska Native communities.

Climate change

A focus on human dimensions of climate change is critical to this position. With increases in temperature and changes to precipitation, Alaska communities are facing dramatic changes to their landscape and traditional sites for harvest of natural resources for their livelihoods or household consumption. These changes are especially felt by Alaska Native communities with longstanding cultural practices that are being altered due to broad-scale environmental changes. The social scientist will need a strong grasp of ecological effects of climate changes and be willing to work with rural communities and tribes to develop adaptive approaches to these changes.

Community resilience

Community resilience is an important area of focus. National forest lands in Alaska make an important contribution to socioeconomic well-being in rural communities. Policy changes, market conditions, and environmental disturbances over the past few decades have resulted in a transition away from reliance on commodity production on Alaska's federal lands to a more diverse economy that includes tourism, specialty forest products, and niche markets. As a result, many Alaska communities have undergone significant transformation. For some, these changes have increased economic vulnerability and reduced community capacity. Others have weathered these changes and restructured their local economies. Alaskans rely on public lands as a source of food and an opportunity to engage in subsistence harvest of game, fish, and forage foods. For Alaska Natives, subsistence is also a matter of cultural survival. Rural Alaskans maintain important social and cultural relations to federal lands, which form an important element of their social and cultural identity by playing a role in family history, social bonding, harvest of culturally-important products, rural competence, and inter-generational exchange. Changes in policy or in natural resource conditions that affect public access to, or use of, national forests can transform these legacy relationships and result in harmful effects to communities, households, and livelihoods, as well as shifts in place attachments, identity, and rural culture. Social science is needed to better understand the relationships between forest-based communities and national forest management and policy; factors that contribute to the long-term sustainability of rural communities having ties to national forest lands; and the role of forest and range management in maintaining and increasing community resilience in the context of dynamic social, economic, and environmental change.

Recreation and tourism

Tourism is an important part of the rural economy in southeast and southcentral Alaska. Alaska communities are abundant with natural and cultural amenities of high interest to visitors, many of which arrive by cruise ship. The proliferation of outfitters and guides providing nature-based tours throughout the landscape has implications for subsistence activities and local recreation use. Tourism provides opportunities for seasonal employment that can augment other income-generating sources. Communities need help planning for and managing tourism and understanding how to maximize local benefits from the industry while protecting important cultural and natural resources.

Tribal engagement

Alaska is home to over 200 federally recognized tribes and Native corporations, which represent the economic interests of tribal members. In the Tongass region, approximately 20 percent of residents are members of Tlingit, Haida, or Tsimshian tribes and in some coastal villages, these rates are much higher. In the Chugach region, tribes and Native Corporations also play an important role. Tribal institutions play a critical role in regional dialogues about resource management and community sustainability. Awareness of Alaska's cultural and environmental history and socio-political landscape is essential for the scientist's success. In particular, it is important for the scientist to grasp subsistence. Understanding of the state of scientific knowledge about subsistence systems and how subsistence is managed and regulated by federal and state agencies is critical for this position.

Collaborative governance

Understanding what leads to successful collaboration in land and resource management issues, particularly in cooperation with tribes will be key to success. Existing collaborative networks in Alaska focus on maintaining a sustainable rate of forest production, enhancing local employment opportunities, incorporating traditional ecological knowledge, and protecting both cultural systems and ecosystems. While collaboration is critical, many collaboratives may not adequately represent the broader public. Research is needed to understand the ebb and flow of internal and external trust relations, how collaborative groups form and change over time, what factors lead to successes and failures of collaboratives, the barriers to effectiveness, and the tradeoffs between integration of science and political considerations in decision making. Working with land managers to develop public engagement strategies for forest and project-level planning is also critical. A clear understanding of social concerns and dynamics is critical to developing programs and policies that effectively engage the public and account for their concerns.

The research approach involves integrating theory and methods from a number of inter-related social science disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, geography, political science, community development, and economics. The research is accomplished independently and on teams formed for specific research studies. In some cases, the scientist will supervise joint venture agreements with academic specialists who assist the scientist in specifying the research problem, assessing alternative research methodologies, implementing research, analyzing data, and publishing and presenting findings. The scientist employs a range of qualitative and quantitative approaches to conducting research. These approaches may include surveys, ethnographic approaches, qualitative interviews, focus groups, cognitive approaches, statistical analysis, quantitative modeling, and rural participatory research methods. The scientist is responsible for final decisions on the appropriate research approach, analyzing data, and developing appropriate means for reporting findings to scientists, managers and citizens.

The duty station for this position will the Forestry Sciences Laboratory located in Juneau, Alaska. The laboratory currently houses researchers and support personnel from three different research programs

within the Pacific Northwest Research Station. Researchers primarily focus on topics relevant to the management of coastal and interior Alaska forest ecosystems, including climate change, soils, hydrology and fisheries research, landscape and vegetation ecology, and wildlife biology. The lab also hosts The Alaska Coastal rainforest center, forest entomologist and pathologist from the State and Private Forestry branch of the Forest Service and sits next to the University of Alaska. Research is frequently conducted in cooperation with the nearby National Forests, the State government, as well as Native American organizations.

We are looking for an individual who:

- Is interested in conducting research to help inform forest management and policy
- Has in-depth experience with empirical/qualitative/quantitative social science research methods
- Has an interest and ability to work well with diverse groups of people from a variety of disciplines
- Has a demonstrated ability to publish in peer-reviewed journals, obtain external funding, and communicate effectively with diverse audiences
- Is a team player who enjoys working with others to accomplish a common goal
- Is able to develop partnerships and work collaboratively with multiple agencies and organizations at various levels of governance

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED...

The purpose of this Outreach Notice is to determine the potential applicant pool for this position. Responses received from this outreach notice will be relied upon to make this determination.

Interested applicants should complete the attached form and send along with a copy of your resume to Simon Kihia at simon.kihia@usda.gov by July 12, 2019. Those desiring further information about the position may inquire via the email address listed above.

About the Pacific Northwest Research Station

The PNW Research Station is one of seven research units in the USDA Forest Service's Research and Development Branch. The USDA Forest Service conducts the most extensive and productive program of integrated forestry research in the world. The scientific information produced by the Station has application on public, private, and tribal lands in the Pacific Northwest (Alaska, Oregon and Washington) and elsewhere in the United States and other parts of the world. The Station's programs reflect the changing character of the questions that science is being asked to help answer.

The PNW Research Station has approximately 250 permanent and temporary employees in professional, administrative, research, technical, and clerical positions. There are five Program Managers that oversee research program organizations, and nine laboratories that provide research. The laboratories are located in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska. The Station is also involved in international work with foreign governments, agencies and universities in many research areas. The research activities of the Station attract considerable interest from Congress, special interest groups, and the public. The Station Director's Office is located in downtown Portland, OR.

Community Information:
About Juneau, AK: https://beta.juneau.org/

To be considered, applicants must be U.S. citizens.
Thank you for your interest in this position

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Outreach Interest
PNW Research Social Scientist
GS-0101-13/14

If you are interested in this position, complete this form together with a copy of your resume and send to Simon Kihia at simon.kihia@usda.gov by July 12, 2019

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

E-Mail Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

EMPLOYMENT

Are you currently a Federal Employee? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

If Yes:

Name of your Agency & Location: _____

Current title/series/grade: _____

Type of Appointment: **Permanent** ☐ **Term** ☐ **Temporary** ☐

If No:

Current Employer: _____

Current Position Title & Salary: _____

Type of Appointment: **Permanent** ☐ **Term** ☐ **Temporary** ☐

Are you eligible for appointment under any of the following special authorities?

- ☐ **Former Peace Corps**
- ☐ **Person with Disabilities**
- ☐ **Student Employment Program**
- ☐ **Veteran with 30% Compensable Disability**
- ☐ **Veteran's Employment Opportunities Act of 1998**
- ☐ **Veteran's Readjustment**
- ☐ **Reinstatement Eligibility**
- ☐ **Other**

Thank-you for your interest in the position!