

USU/UDWR Graduate Researcher: Bighorn sheep/Mule deer Demography, Movement, and Competition in Southern Utah

Utah State University (USU) and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) seek a master's graduate student to study demography, movement, and competition between bighorn sheep and mule deer on the Zion unit of southern Utah. The successful candidate will be employed by UDWR part-time and will also conduct research as a graduate student at USU. The position and research will be based out of the UDWR Southern Region Office in Cedar City, but the student may, if necessary, spend 1-2 semesters on the USU campus in Logan completing course work. Job duties at UDWR will include working on a variety of wildlife and habitat projects in southern Utah while not conducting research. The research will culminate in the completion of a conventional, thesis-based master's degree in wildland resources or ecology from USU. Our desire is that, upon completion, the graduated student will take a permanent position with UDWR. This is an outstanding opportunity for a hard-working, dedicated individual interested in pursuing a career in wildlife management in Utah.

The research project will be supervised by Kezia Manlove (Assistant Professor of Wildland Resources & Ecology, Utah State University). Project objectives are to uncover potential pathways for apparent competition among bighorn sheep and mule deer on the Zion unit. The project builds from a rich GPS and direct-observation dataset amassed by USU, UDWR, and Zion National Park beginning in 2015. Duties for the graduate project will include (1) gathering field data collection commensurate with the project (including maintaining the direct observation dataset, conducting mortality investigations for collared animals throughout the Zion Unit, etc.); (2) analyzing the GPS data and direct observation data using state-of-the-art movement and demographic modeling methods; (3) presenting research findings to UDWR and the broader wildlife research community; and (4) producing a master's thesis, along with 1-2 peer-reviewed publications.

Utah State University is home to a vibrant wildlife research community. The Wildlife Disease Ecology lab studies bighorn sheep and mule deer throughout the intermountain west, providing a unique opportunity to draw comparisons in movement and demography across environmental gradients. USU and UDWR are committed to promoting diversity and excellence in wildlife management.

Interested individuals should contact Kezia Manlove (kezia.manlove@usu.edu) for additional information on application materials. Applicant review will begin on Friday, November 26th.