

Opportunity Title: USDA-FS DeSoto Gaps Forest Research

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-FS-SRS-2025-0014

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

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How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click **APPLY**.*

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations. At least one recommendation must be submitted in order for the mentor to view your application.

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

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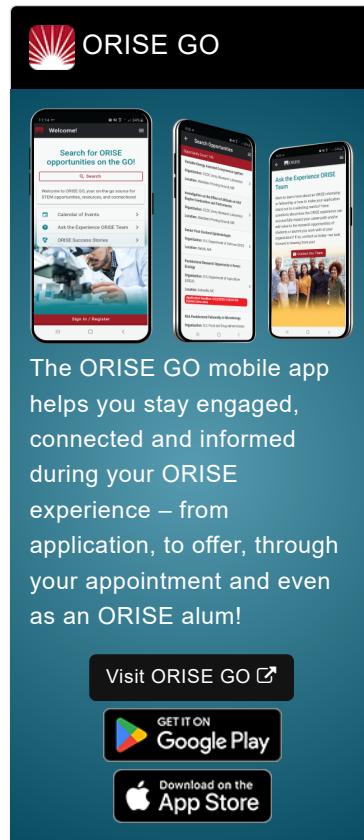
Application Deadline 3/28/2025 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications will be reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

USDA Forest Service Office/Lab and Location: A fellowship opportunity is available with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) within the Forest Service Southern Research Station (SRS) located in Saucier, Mississippi.

At the heart of the USDA Forest Service's mission is their purpose. Everything they do is intended to help sustain forests and grasslands for present and future generations. Why? Because their stewardship work supports nature in sustaining life. This is the purpose that drives the agency's mission and motivates their work across the agency. It's been there from the agency's very beginning, and it still drives them. To advance the mission and serve their purpose, the USDA Forest Service balances the short and long-term needs of people and nature by: working in collaboration with communities and our partners; providing access to resources and experiences that promote economic, ecological, and social vitality; connecting people to the land and one another; and delivering world-class science, technology and land management.

The Southern Research Station (SRS) operates laboratories and experimental forest across the southern US from Texas to Virginia, including the Southern Institute of Forest Genetics (SIFG) field station located on the Harrison Experimental Forest (HEF) near Gulfport, MS. The Southern



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Region (aka, Region 8) of the Forest Service manages national forests across the same area, including the DeSoto National Forest in southern Mississippi. The office will be at the HEF (Saucier, MS) with the research being conducted on the DeSoto Ranger District (Wiggins, MS) and on the HEF.

Research Project: The USDA Forest Service's Southern Research (SRS) seeks an ORISE Fellow (<https://orise.orau.gov/science-education/internships-scholarships-fellowships>) with knowledge and experience in tree biology and silviculture for an exciting project to help in the conservation and restoration of longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*). In conjunction with SRS's Harrison Experimental Forest (HEF) and the Southern Region's DeSoto National Forest (DNF) and university cooperators, SRS-4160 is supporting research studying the development of regeneration following experimental patch clear-cutting in mature second growth stands of longleaf pine. This information will help the Forest Service and cooperating state agencies with efforts to conserve and restore longleaf pine, a once abundant but now rapidly declining foundational species of the lower Gulf Coast region. The fellow will join a team of collaborating scientists, technicians, and graduate students using a range of resources to evaluate elements of stand regeneration, including plant, insect, microbe, and wildlife diversity and abundance. In addition, the fellow will have opportunities to develop skills related to forest genetics research in collaboration with the co-located Southern Institute of Forest Genetics (SIFG).

Learning Objectives: The participant will be a part of an interdisciplinary team studying the regeneration dynamics in patch clear cuts of longleaf pine on the DeSoto NF in southern Mississippi. Under the direction of a mentor, they will take an active part in selecting research questions and developing experimental and analytical approaches to answer the questions. The participant will take an active learning role and gain experience in the project, collecting and analyzing data and communicating research findings through presentations and publications. Specific learning objectives will include:

- Identify plant and animal species in longleaf pine forests
- Collect accurate data in the field, organize and analyze the data and
- Explain and communicate research results to scientists and interested lay people.

Mentor: The mentor for this opportunity is Dana Nelson (charles.d.nelson@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: March 2025. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for six months but may be extended upon recommendation of USDA Forest Service and is

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contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. Individual or family health insurance is available, with 75% of the cost covered by the ORISE Fellowship Program. Some funding will be available to reimburse travel-related expenses to assist in field research and to participate in developmental activities.

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and USDA Forest Service. Participants do not become employees of USDA, USDA Forest Service, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.



Questions: Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process please email ORISE.USFS.SRS@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a bachelor's or master's degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past one year and three months, or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2026.

Preferred skills/experience:

- Academic training in areas such as dendrology, tree biology (silvics), silviculture, and forest mensuration,
- Good quantitative analysis skills, particularly in terms of forest inventory, and
- Interest in participating in interdisciplinary, team-based research projects to facilitate forest restoration.

Point of Contact [Justina](#)

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree received within the last 15 months or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2026 12:00:00 AM.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([6](#) )
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([9](#) )