

Opportunity Title: USDA-FS Tribal Values, Fire, and Fuels Treatments

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-FS-SRS-2025-0058

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.

Application Deadline 7/25/2025 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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

USDA Forest Service Office/Lab and Location: Up to four fellowship opportunities are available with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) within the Forest Service Southern Research Station (SRS) located in Arcata, California.

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.

Research Project: The USDA Forest Service has adopted a 10-year wildfire strategy, "Confronting the Wildfire Crisis: A Strategy for Protecting Communities and Improving Resilience in America's Forests" and designated 21 focal landscapes for reducing wildfire risk. These are now referred to as "Forest Health and Fuels Emergency Situation Determination (FHFESD) lands." Successful implementation of wildfire risk reduction will involve engaging Tribal priorities and knowledges, including use of fire to



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advance cultural objectives. Specifically, there is a need to develop visual guides and identify metrics for evaluating desired conditions of fire prone ecosystems and habitats to promote Tribal values. These include reduction of risk from uncharacteristically severe wildfires, promoting access to traditional foods and basketry resources, and supporting healthy wildlife habitat within the Klamath Basin priority landscape within the FHFESD lands.

Fellows will contribute to a multifaceted interdisciplinary research effort to 1) examine opportunities to incorporate interests of Tribes in wildland fire and fuels management planning, including consideration of Tribal cultural resources and Indigenous Knowledge; and 2) to support inclusion of prescribed burning for cultural objectives in wildfire risk reduction. These include informing designs of shaded fuelbreaks, wildland-urban interface (WUI) and road system treatments, with a focus on advancing resilience of forests and protection of rural-tribal communities and critical infrastructure. Such efforts are being planned and implemented within the Klamath Basin priority landscape within the Forest Service designated FHFESD lands. These are aligned with the planning documents such as the Six Rivers National Forest Hazardous Fuels and Fire Management Project (2023).

Learning Objectives: Fellows will gain experience:

1. Installing and collecting data from forestry plots for eco-cultural objectives
2. Participating in field monitoring hazardous fuels, timber-silvicultural, and prescribed fire treatments
3. Collaborating with Tribal practitioners to design efficient monitoring strategies for evaluating effects of using fire and associated fuel treatments on key ecocultural values and resources.
4. Evaluating data and photos of Pacific fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) den sites to evaluate characteristics of den trees including number of stems, lower branches, and location of cavities, and the habitat characteristics they are contained within.
5. Developing support tools for wildland fire managers and decision makers that promote cultural ecosystem services of trees while facilitating fire management goals.
6. Developing a visual guide for designing shaded (hardwood) fuelbreaks for fire managers (through interviews, site visits, photographs, and field measurements of fuel conditions).

Mentor: The mentor for this opportunity is Frank Lake (frank.lake@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

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

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year 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 part time during the academic year then full time during summer.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **Stipend depends on full or part time schedule, and will be based on a full time monthly range of \$3,200-\$4,000/month. A housing stipend is available for summer field research.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-U.S. citizen applicants should refer to the [Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens Details page](#) of the program website for information about the valid immigration statuses that are acceptable for program participation. Foreign national candidates may have a mandatory in-person requirement depending on visa status.

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 an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree in the one of the relevant fields.

Preferred skills:

- Interest or experience with: Tribal fire stewardship, Tribal cultural protocols, wildland fire science, ethnobotany, participatory and Indigenous research methodologies
- Basic familiarity conducting forestry-related field research, ability to hike several miles, including steep slopes, across rugged mountain terrain in inclement weather.
- Knowledge of literature databases (E.g. ProQuest, Google Scholar, EndNote) and/or archival research protocols, sources, and catalogues, compiling and synthesizing data.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including an ability to bring people together, collaborate effectively in teams or in small groups with shared responsibilities.
- Familiarity respectfully engaging with Tribal communities, including elders and knowledge holders. Being able to be open to and

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understanding of diverse perspectives.

- Familiarity with engaging people and communities through workshops, surveys, interviews, or similar approaches.

Point of Contact [Justina](#)

Eligibility • **Degree:** Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, or Master's Degree.

- Requirements** • **Discipline(s):**
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([7](#) 👁)
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([3](#) 👁)
 - **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([5](#) 👁)