

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-FS Preparation and Analysis of Environmental Samples  
at the Grand Rapids Forestry Sciences Laboratory

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-FS-NRS-2025-0088

**Organization** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**Reference Code** USDA-FS-NRS-2025-0088

**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** 1/2/2026 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 Northern Research Station (NRS) located in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Grand Rapids is a small, rural community in north-central Minnesota. The Forestry Sciences Laboratory is located on the University of Minnesota North Central Research and Outreach Center adjacent to the Minnesota North Community College - Itasca Campus.

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 chemistry laboratory in the Grand Rapids Forestry



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Sciences Laboratory supports studies of forest and resource management. The office is part of the Research and Development program of the Northern Research Station (NRS) of the USDA Forest Service. The primary opportunity of the fellows will be to participate in the preparation of samples for chemical analysis and learn a range of skills associated with a chemistry laboratory. Samples may be soils, sediments, plant tissues, or water collected from studies. In addition to research of NRS scientists, the laboratory supports analysis for the NRS Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, the Air Resource Monitoring Program, other cooperating federal agencies, and academic partners. The opportunity will include cataloging and organization of incoming samples, processing and preparing samples for analysis and entering of data produced during analysis. Fellows will collaborate with the laboratory manager (chemist), a physical sciences technician, and other staff associated with mentoring by a hydrologist/project leader (supervisor of all staff within the local research unit).

**Learning Objectives:** Fellows arriving with more advanced skills and experience with chemical analysis may be provided the opportunity to learn about instrument calibration, operation, and data quality control/quality assurance procedures, or operate analytical instruments for the measurement for basic inorganic solutes/constituents and nutrients. The fellow/s will be exposed to both research and research operations support, which are both germane to gaining insight of routine stages of many different science support positions within research institutions, whether in a federal government research agency, academia, or the commercial sector.

**Mentor:** The mentor for this opportunity is Stephen Sebestyen ([stephen.sebestyen@usda.gov](mailto:stephen.sebestyen@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: September 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 contingent on the availability of funds.

**Level of Participation:** The appointment is part time. The opportunity is in the range of 10 to 20 hours per week, with flexible hours within period between 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM, weekdays only, typically during the academic year (fall and spring semesters only). A fellow is expected to reliably complete the agreed upon total hours per month (based upon 10-20 hr per week).

**Participant Stipend:** The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend is \$680 per month, but contingent on participation level.**

**Citizenship Requirements:** This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-

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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.NRS@orau.org](mailto:ORISE.USFS.NRS@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received an associate's or bachelor's degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past five years, or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2028.

**Preferred skills:**

- Attention to detail
- Good interpersonal communication skills
- Ability to follow and adhere to protocols
- Willing to be in a chemistry laboratory and associated sample preparatory rooms.
- Willingness for moderate physical exertion.
- Willing to take any required Forest Service trainings.
- A familiarity with spreadsheets for later data analysis is preferred.

**Stipend** \$680.00 Monthly

**Point of Contact** [Justina](#)

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Degree:** Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2028 12:00:00 AM.
  - **Minimum Overall GPA:** 2.50
  - **Discipline(s):**
    - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** (4👁)
    - **Earth and Geosciences** (4👁)
    - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (14👁)
    - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (5👁)
    - **Other Non-Science & Engineering** (1👁)
  - **Age:** Must be 18 years of age

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- **Veteran Status:** Veterans Preference, degree received within the last 120 month(s).