

Opportunity Title: USDA-FS Summer Fellowship: Post-Fire Water Quality, Debris Flows, and Carbon Storage

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-FS-PSWRS-2026-0181

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-FS-PSWRS-2026-0181

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 6/19/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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

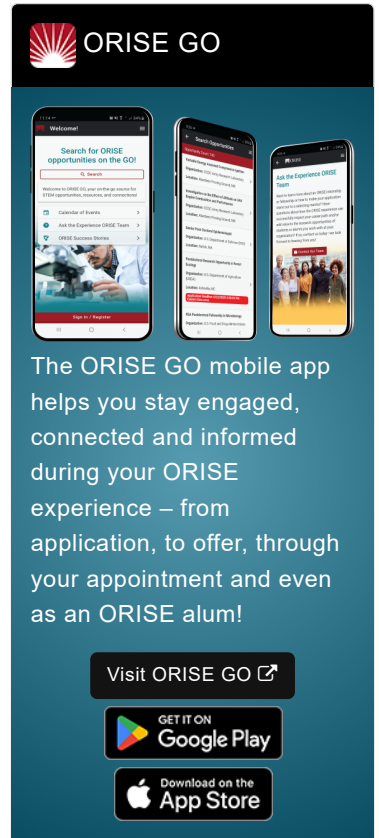
USDA Forest Service Office/Lab and Location: A fellowship opportunity is available with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) within the Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSWRS) located in Sacramento, California.

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: Through the mentorship by Forest Service technical staff and project leads, summer research fellows will participate in an immersive field and laboratory experience investigating watershed and subsurface responses to environmental disturbances. Fellows will practice





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a variety of data collection, monitoring, and analysis techniques by collaborating on one or more of the following interconnected research tracks:

- 1. Post-Fire Hydrology and Debris Flow Hazard:** Fellows will collaborate with researchers to collect and analyze field data related to post-fire runoff and sediment transport. Activities include helping with stream gauge measurements, evaluating topographic and geomorphic changes, and analyzing debris flow initiation mechanisms in recently burned catchments.
- 2. Post-Fire and Drought Soil and Weathered Bedrock Carbon Storage:** Fellows will research the impacts of fire and drought on carbon cycling by helping in the collection of soil and weathered bedrock samples. Under mentorship, they will practice sampling gas wells and prepare samples for laboratory analysis to evaluate carbon storage and respiration rates within the root zone.
- 3. Post-Fire Geochemical and Microbiological Vadose Zone Processes:** Fellows will collaborate on assessing biogeochemical alterations following wildfires. Activities involve collecting and analyzing water, soil, and bedrock samples to observe microbial community shifts and geochemical fluxes within the vadose and groundwater zones.

Learning Objectives: This summer program provides an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with Forest Service monitoring protocols and research methodologies regarding the dynamics of root-zone moisture and gases. Through these projects, fellows will gain an understanding of how the agency approaches quantifying subsurface processes and evaluating post-fire landscape dynamics and hazards. Fellows will also receive dedicated mentorship in data analysis, scientific communication, and field safety.

Mentor: The mentor for this opportunity is David Dralle (david.dralle@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: May 2026. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for 3 months but may be extended upon recommendation of USDA Forest Service and is 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. **The anticipated stipend is \$4,373 monthly.**

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

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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.PSWRS@ornl.gov and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral in the one of the relevant fields.

Stipend \$4,373.00 Monthly

Point of Contact [Michele](#)

Eligibility Requirements

- **Degree:** Currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree.

- **Discipline(s):**

- **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([12](#))
- **Communications and Graphics Design** ([2](#))
- **Computer, Information, and Data Sciences** ([17](#))
- **Earth and Geosciences** ([21](#))
- **Engineering** ([29](#))
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([14](#))
- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#))
- **Mathematics and Statistics** ([11](#))
- **Physics** ([16](#))
- **Science & Engineering-related** ([2](#))
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([29](#))