

Opportunity Title: EPA Avian PFAS Exposure Across Heterogeneous Landscapes

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OCSP-OPP-IO-2026-0003

Organization U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Reference Code EPA-OCSP-OPP-IO-2026-0003

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

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcripts – [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. Your application will be considered incomplete, and will not be reviewed until one recommendation is submitted.

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

Connect with ORISE...on the GO! Download the new ORISE GO mobile app in the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#) to help you stay engaged, connected, and informed during your ORISE experience and beyond!

Application Deadline 7/17/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications may be reviewed on a rolling-basis and this posting could close before the deadline.**

EPA Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSP), located in Duluth, Minnesota.

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. EPA works to ensure that: Americans have clean air, land and water; National efforts to reduce environmental risks are based on the best available scientific information; Federal laws protecting human health and the environment are administered and enforced fairly, effectively and as Congress intended; Environmental stewardship is integral to U.S. policies concerning natural resources, human health, economic growth, energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, and international trade, and these factors are similarly considered in establishing environmental policy; All parts of society have access to accurate information sufficient to effectively participate in managing human health and environmental risks; Contaminated lands and toxic sites are cleaned up; and chemicals in the marketplace are reviewed for safety.

Research Project: Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a complex class of thousands of chemicals of potential concern in terms of ecological effects. Some PFAS have proven to be both very persistent and widely distributed in the environment; however, not all have been well-studied. The environmental fate and effects of a few PFAS (e.g.,

 OAK RIDGE INSTITUTE
FOR SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

ORISE GO

The ORISE GO mobile app helps you stay engaged, connected and informed during your ORISE experience – from application, to offer, through your appointment and even as an ORISE alum!

Visit ORISE GO 

GET IT ON
 Google Play

Download on the
 App Store

Opportunity Title: EPA Avian PFAS Exposure Across Heterogeneous Landscapes

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OCSP-OPP-IO-2026-0003

perfluorooctanesulfonate [PFOS]; perfluorooctanoic acid [PFOA]) are more well known and studied. Monitoring studies indicate that a wide variety of avian species are exposed to PFAS, including gulls, wading birds, piscivorous and insectivorous birds, and terrestrial raptors. Some PFAS are known to bioaccumulate and biomagnify, though the distribution and movement of PFAS in avian food webs are poorly understood.

This research project aims to investigate potential effects of PFAS exposure on avian embryos at observational and experimental sites in Duluth, MN. The ongoing project will involve collection and analysis of data on egg exposure and any possible effects on egg hatching success. Experimental methods will include study of exposure resulting from widespread use of aqueous film forming foams (AFFF) at the Duluth Air National Guard Base as well as designed exposures of eggs to PFOS at experimental sites. Potential measures of effect may include hatching success, developmental rate, and nestling growth post-hatch.

The research participant will also develop their own research complementary to the following activities with guidance from the mentor and research team:

- Collection and analysis of avian samples (eggs and nestlings)
- Performing studies and statistical analyses on data resulting from nest monitoring and radio telemetry
- Fitting and applying lifecycle models to exposure scenarios; analysis and interpretation of results
- Presenting research results at regional, national, and/or international conferences and workshops.
- Contributing to the preparation of peer-reviewed journal articles and disseminating research results to project partners and stakeholders.

Learning Objectives: The research participant can expect to learn skills in applied ecotoxicology, ornithology, toxicology, and biology and will learn how methods in toxicology can be applied to support environmental decision making. The participant will gain experience in multiple aspects of research project planning, communication, coordination, implementation, modeling, and analysis. The selected participant will be integrated into a transdisciplinary research team and engaged in multiple aspects of research planning, communication, research implementation, and analysis. The participant will be afforded an opportunity to interact with internationally recognized leaders, both within and outside EPA, in the area of toxicology and regulatory environmental science. The participant will have the opportunity to contribute to and/or publish original research, attend and present at local and national scientific meetings, and develop collaborations with other investigators as appropriate to addressing the research problem.

It is expected that this training opportunity will provide an early career scientist with knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to apply new technologies and associated data to regulatory decision-making at the

Opportunity Title: EPA Avian PFAS Exposure Across Heterogeneous Landscapes

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OCSP-OPP-IO-2026-0003

local, national, and/or international scale and to pursue a professional career in life sciences research.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Matthew Etterson (etterson.matthew@epa.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: June 1, 2026. All start dates are flexible and vary depending on numerous factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year and may be renewed three to four additional years upon EPA recommendation and subject to availability of funding.

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 range is \$52,000 - \$62,000 annually.**

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

EPA Security Clearance: Completion of a successful background investigation by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is required for an applicant to be on-boarded at EPA.

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 EPA. Participants do not become employees of EPA, 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.

ORISE offers all ORISE EPA graduate students and Postdocs a free 5 year membership to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA).

The successful applicant(s) will be required to comply with Environmental, Safety and Health (ES&H) requirements of the hosting facility, including but not limited to, COVID-19 requirements (e.g. facial covering, physical distancing, testing, vaccination).

Questions: Please see the [FAQ section](#) of our website. After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process please email ORISE.EPA.Other@orau.org / and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should have received or be currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in one of the relevant fields (Wildlife Management, Wildlife Biology, Biology, Ecology, or a related field).

Opportunity Title: EPA Avian PFAS Exposure Across Heterogeneous Landscapes

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OCSP-OPP-IO-2026-0003

Preferred skills:



- Experience working with and/or handling birds.
- Academic background in wildlife management, wildlife biology, toxicology, biology, biological sciences along with an interest in applied research in ecotoxicology.
- Experience with avian radiotelemetry research and analysis of the resulting data
- Field research experience with in vivo avian ecotoxicology study design, data collection, statistical analyses, and a general knowledge of good field research practices.
- Familiarity with literature search tools and strategies
- Computer skills relating to data collection, analysis, and graphical presentation
- Coursework and/or experience with statistical analysis
- Computational skills (e.g., programming, R-based statistics)
- Skills in oral and written communication
- Skills in appropriate research data documentation and record keeping
- Familiarity with routine quality assurance/quality control procedures for laboratory research

Stipend \$52,000.00 – \$62,000.00 Yearly

Point of Contact [Ashley](#)

Eligibility • **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only

Requirements • **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree.

- **Discipline(s):**
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (2 )
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (4 )