

**Opportunity Title:** National Wetland Condition Assessment Plant Data

Research & Support

**Opportunity Reference Code:** EPA-Water-2019-0033

**Organization** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**Reference Code** EPA-Water-2019-0033

**How to 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

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

If you have questions, send an email to [EPArpp@orau.org](mailto:EPArpp@orau.org). Please include the reference code for this opportunity in your email.

**Application Deadline** 10/1/2019 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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

A postgraduate research opportunity is currently available at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Water (OW). This appointment will be served with the Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds located in Washington, DC.

The participant will be located in the Monitoring and Analysis Branch and support activities related to the National Aquatic Resource Survey (NARS) program, with a focus on the National Wetland Condition Assessment (NWCA; <https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/nwca>). NWCA is a statistically based survey designed to characterize the ecological condition of wetlands across the conterminous United States every 5 years. It is a component of the NARS program and a key activity in EPA's efforts to achieve national water-quality goals under the Clean Water Act.

Throughout their appointment, the selected participant will research and learn about EPA's efforts to monitor and assess wetland and other aquatic resources via large-scale, statistically-based studies such as the NWCA. Most of their focus will be to support scientific research activities related to wetland plant data collected in NWCA and may include:

- Research on wetland plant species characteristics and compiling information on species traits (e.g., nativity, coefficients of conservatism)
- Learning techniques to compile and perform quality assurance of plant data collected in NWCA
- Research into biological indices (e.g., floristic quality, vegetation) to describe wetland condition
- Analyzing and presenting data collected during NWCA surveys
- Collaborating with EPA scientists and partners on preparations for next NWCA survey in 2021

The participant will gain an understanding of EPA's Clean Water Act programs and observe how EPA coordinates with States, Tribes, and other federal agencies to meet national water quality goals. The participant will have the opportunity to interact with




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resource managers and scientists from other agencies and across the country. Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will generate reports, analyze data, create outreach materials, and have opportunities to submit and present research and project results to interagency groups, professional societies and conferences, and scientific publications. At the end of their appointment, the participant will have increased knowledge and experience on:

- Principles and practices used in statistically-based analysis of biological data collected in wetlands
- Using various data and spatial analysis tools (including GIS, python, and R statistical software)
- Collaborating with a broad and diverse group of partners to accomplish water-quality assessment objectives
- Communicating results of scientific analysis to diverse audiences of wetland scientists, managers, and policy makers

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. The appointment will initially be for one year and may be renewed up to three additional years upon EPA recommendation and subject to availability of funding. The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. The annual stipend rate will be as follows based on educational level: \$47,016 (Bachelors), \$57,510 (Masters), \$69,581 (PhD), \$83,398 (PhD + 2 years of related postgraduate experience). Funding may be made available to reimburse the participant's travel expenses to present the results of his/her research at scientific conferences. No funding will be made available to cover travel costs for pre-appointment visits, relocation costs, tuition and fees, or participant's health insurance. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. The appointment is full-time at EPA in the Washington, DC area. Participants do not become employees of EPA, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits.

**Qualifications**

The qualified candidate should have received a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields, with a significant focus on wetland plants and plant communities, or be currently pursuing one of the degrees and will reach completion by October 1, 2019. Degree must have been received within five years of the appointment start date.

Preferred skills:

- Experience identifying plants and proficiency in the use of pertinent floras and taxonomic keys for field projects and/or research
- Understanding of plant taxonomy and the use of floras, taxonomic keys, and floristic databases sufficient to assist with nomenclatural standardization of plant species names for data spanning a wide geographic range
- Proficiency in the review of scientific resources, e.g., floras, scientific publications, floristic or trait data bases, to allow compilation and documentation of information and data describing species traits (e.g., native status, growth habit, coefficients of conservatism, functional traits)
- Experience with plant ecological field work, data collection, and data analysis
- Strong organizational, oral, written, and electronic communication skills

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- Proficiency with Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, and Word
- Strong computational skills and experience using the R statistical program for data management and analysis

**Eligibility  
Requirements**

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 10/1/2019 11:59:00 PM.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (5 👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (7 👁)