**Montana State University: Ph.D. Position Available in Ecological Health of Yellowstone Birds**

Montana State University’s Institute on Ecosystems is seeking a highly motivated sincere, and creative individual to join our team as a PhD student. The project will draw in existing bird survey data to quantify species population trends, analyze potential environmental correlates, project future trends under climate and land use scenarios, and recommend management actions to conserve species in decline. This position is funded by the Montana State University and the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC), a consortium of federal and state agencies with management jurisdictions in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The three-year position will include two years of research assistantship and one year of teaching assistantship.

The successful candidate will work under the supervision of Dr. Andrew Hansen and collaborate with a diverse team of researchers from MSU, USFWS, and NPS on various aspects of the project.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Conducting Research: Compile data from the USFWS Breeding Bird Survey and the USFS Integrated Bird Monitoring programs; Perform statistical modeling of population trends of select bird species for the period 1969-2023; Use species distribution modeling techniques to develop spatially explicit models of bird abundance as a function of biophysical and human pressure factors; Use the species distribution models to project bird abundances under alternative future climate and land management scenarios; evaluate past and projected future trends and compile the results into a color-coded report card for communication with diverse stakeholders; and Identify best management practices for species in decline.
2. Collaborating with the Research Team: The candidate will work collaboratively with other team members. Active participation in research meetings, seminars, and workshops will be expected.
3. Data Analysis and Interpretation: The candidate will be responsible for performing data analysis using appropriate statistical methods, software, and tools.
4. Academic Writing: The candidate is expected to write scientific papers, reports, and other research-related documentation, as well as prepare manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals and conference presentations.

**Qualifications:**

1. Educational Background: Masters (preferred) or bachelor’s degree in a relevant field (e.g., ecology, wildlife biology, environmental science, etc.).
2. Research Experience: Demonstrated ability to conduct ecological research.
3. Analytical Skills: Experience in computer programming (e.g., R-programming), management of large data sets, and geospatial software packages (e.g., ArcGIS, QGIS).
4. Academic Writing: Strong written and verbal communication skills are vital, with a proven ability to write scientific papers and reports.
5. Collaboration: An ability to work collaboratively in a team environment and communicate effectively with fellow researchers and supervisors.
6. Time Management: Excellent organizational skills to manage multiple tasks and meet deadlines efficiently.

**Duration and Compensation:** This position is funded through MSU, the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The salary and benefits will be commensurate with institutional policies and standard stipends for PhD students. The student will be required to participate as a graduate teaching assistant for two semesters.

**Application Instructions:** Interested candidates should submit the following documents to the Institute on Ecosystems Program Manager, Madison Hebner at madison.hebner@montana.edu.

1. Curriculum Vitae (CV) detailing academic background, research experience, and any relevant publications.
2. Cover Letter explaining interest in the position, relevant experience, and future research goals.
3. Contact information for three academic/professional references.
4. Unofficial transcripts of courses taken.

**Application Deadline**: October 1, 2023, or until a suitable candidate is found.

Montana State University supports expanding opportunities for under-represented communities and thus experience and interest in working with people from diverse racial, ethic, and socioeconomic backgrounds is preferred. We look forward to welcoming an enthusiastic PhD student to our team.