

**PhD Research Assistantship: Socio-Ecological Dimensions of Protected Areas
Department of Environment & Society, Utah State University**

The Socio-Ecological Systems Lab at Utah State University seeks an outstanding PhD student to join an interdisciplinary research team studying how national parks are connected to surrounding socio-ecological systems. The successful applicant will enroll in USU's doctoral program in either Environment and Society or Ecology, and will receive funding from a three-year assistantship to conduct social science research in and around five U.S. national parks.

The National Science Foundation-funded, multi-institutional project seeks to understand how jurisdictional boundaries across wildlands can interrupt ecological flows and habitat connectivity, and whether collaborations among stakeholders can enhance connectivity across such boundaries. The successful applicant will work with Dr. Mark Brunson and other project investigators to gather information about land uses and goals of landowners and managers in protected area-centered ecosystems, as well as their participation in cross-jurisdictional collaborative efforts, and to assess how those efforts influence ecological flows and ecosystem connectivity. Current funding covers research costs as well as stipend, tuition, and 75% of student health insurance for the successful applicant for three years. We will work with the applicant to develop a funding plan to cover any remaining portion of the student's graduate program.

The ideal candidate will have:

- Experience conducting qualitative and/or quantitative social science research;
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively with interdisciplinary colleagues from diverse backgrounds;
- Interest in interdisciplinary, coupled-systems quantitative modeling;
- Academic qualifications that meet the admission standards for acceptance into a PhD program at Utah State University;
- Completed a Master of Science degree (strongly preferred).

Interested applicants should initiate a conversation with lab director Mark Brunson in an email (Mark.Brunson@usu.edu) that briefly outlines research interests and experience. Candidates will need to submit an application for admission to USU's doctoral programs through the School of Graduate Studies (<http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/>).

*Mark W. Brunson
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