



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service  
Employment Outreach Notice



Forest Inventory and Analysis  
Resource Monitoring and Assessment Program  
Pacific Northwest Research Station, Anchorage Alaska

Coastal Alaska Unit

**Not-to-Exceed (NTE) 120 Day Detail or Temporary Promotion:**

Up to four (4) total positions (dependent on staffing needs):

- Crew Leader, Supervisory Biological Scientist, GS-0401-09
  - Crew Leader, Lead Forestry Technician, GS-0462-07
- Crew Member, Forestry Technician (Research), GS-0462-06

See OPM guidelines for wage information:

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>

**PLEASE REPLY by COB March 25, 2020**

These are Not-to-Exceed (NTE) 120-day detail or temporary promotion opportunities.  
The expected duration of these positions is approximately 90 days from mid May through mid August.

Anticipated start date is 05/11/2020 (PP10)

Anticipated end date 08/14/2020 (PP16)

A formal vacancy announcement will not be issued for these temporary detail or promotional opportunities. If selected, a transcript will be required, so please have one readily available. Additionally, ***candidates may be considered for non-competitive consideration for permanent placement outside of a formal vacancy announcement if eligible and qualified.***

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE POSITIONS send a completed outreach response form and your resume to:**

Dan Irvine and Sarah Ellison: SM.FS.AFSLOutreach@usda.gov

In 2020, the PNWRS Coastal Alaska FIA Data Collection crew will cover the Pacific coastline of southeast and southcentral Alaska including the Tongass and Chugach National Forests and the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. We anticipate that the work required of these positions will occur in Anchorage from approximately May 11 – June 5. Starting June 10, these positions will work an 8-on / 6-off schedule. Depending on the home duty location of qualified respondents, employees may either be flown back to Anchorage for the 6 days off, or possibly may be flown back to their home duty station location during the 6 days off, if a cost comparison determines it financially prudent to do so.

**Those desiring further information about the position duties, may inquire via the email listed above.**

## **ABOUT THE POSITIONS**

Positions with FIA in Alaska are adventurous, challenging, and rewarding! The terrain encountered while flying, hiking, and working can be immensely spectacular, but it can also be very physically and mentally challenging. Physical fitness, willingness to work long hours and live in close quarters, and flexibility to changing situations are key qualities for success.

Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) is a nationwide program which collects, processes, analyzes, evaluates, and publishes comprehensive information on forest and other related renewable resources. The Anchorage Forestry Sciences Lab (AFSL) is part of the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station (PNWRS), and is responsible for the inventory of Alaska, Hawaii, and US affiliated Pacific islands. The Alaska FIA program conducts forest inventories and forest health monitoring on forestlands of all land ownerships. FIA installs permanent research plots that are measured on a 10-year cycle. A wide range of forestry variables are collected on each plot in addition to forest health measurements that can include vegetation, lichens, soils, fuels, and crown measurements. The inventory data are widely used by forest managers, local and state governments and federal agencies in making policy decisions.

In Alaska, the inventory is divided into two units, Coastal and Interior. The Coastal Alaska field season usually lasts from May through August, with the Interior season lasting into mid-September. After a series of trainings and FIA certification, together lasting 2-4 weeks, the field season generally consists of a work schedule including 8-9 days in the field, working 8-12 hours per day, followed by 5-6 days off back in Anchorage.

Alaska contains a wide diversity of ecological communities ranging from coastal temperate rain forests to mixed boreal hardwood forests, and includes expansive black spruce bogs. Extensive areas of alpine tundra, shrub land, high peaks, and glaciers occupy the non-forest areas. Field work conditions in Alaska are often arduous. Work may be performed in inclement weather (cold, rain, snow), on steep, slippery, and/or brushy slopes, and in the presence of moose, bear, wolves, and biting insects. A significant amount of off-trail hiking is required for these positions. Employees must carry a 45-pound pack daily; with pack weights occasionally exceeding 55 pounds.

Alaska crews regularly travel in small aircraft including float planes and helicopters, and occasionally use boats for field access. Successful completion of an underwater egress training is an annual expectation for all field staff working in Coastal Alaska. Additionally, some employees carry a firearm for bear protection and are subject to a federal background investigation and pre-hire and random drug testing. A firearm for protection from aggressive wildlife is carried by a trained and certified employee on every field crew. If not certified in a firearm bearing position, Bear Spray will be carried during fieldwork.

During the field season, living quarters can vary from remote camps to hotels to research vessels. In Coastal Alaska, the primary accommodations during the field season are based on a research vessel which can be extremely cramped, with limited privacy and constant background noise from generators. Motion sickness is a problem for some employees. Although attempts are made to honor special dietary preferences, accommodations may not be possible in all field operation settings.

### **Alaska Data Collection Crew Leader**

### **Lead Forestry Technician (GS-0462-07) or Biological Scientist (GS-0401-09)**

The Crew Leader reports directly to an FIA Field Coordinator and is responsible to lead a crew of two to four people collecting field data for annual inventory and forest health monitoring in all parts of the state. The Crew Leader is responsible to ensure the safety of the field crew and that data collected by the crew is accurate, reliable, and repeatable. The primary technical responsibilities of this position include photo interpretation, locating inventory plots in remote settings, measuring various forest and site attributes, and supporting the safety program. Field measurements taken by crews include: tree, sapling, and seedling data (species, diameter, height, defect, insect & disease

identification, crown condition, damage, etc.); understory vegetation structure and composition assessments; down woody material measurements (line transects, litter depth, and fuels measurement, etc.); and site index and site attribute assessments (site tree selection, slope, aspect, topographic position, site description, etc.). Crews use portable, handheld computers to collect data in the field and then process the data later using laptops to address any inconsistencies or errors in field data collection. Duties include daily documentation, downloading, and editing of field data.

### Alaska Data Collection Crew Member (GS-0462-06)

These positions report directly to an FIA Crew Leader or Coordinator. The primary responsibilities of this position include photo interpretation, locating inventory plots in remote settings, measuring various forest and site attributes, and supporting the safety program. Field measurements taken by crews include: tree, sapling, and seedling data (species, diameter, height, defect, insect & disease identification, crown condition, damage, etc.); understory vegetation structure and composition assessments; down woody material measurements (line transects, litter depth, and fuels measurement, etc.); and site index and site attribute assessments (site tree selection, slope, aspect, topographic position, site description, etc.). Crews use portable, handheld computers to collect data in the field and then process the data later using laptops to address any inconsistencies or errors in field data collection. Duties include daily documentation, downloading, and editing of field data.

## ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Anchorage is a full-service community nestled between the Chugach Mountains and the upper shores of Cook Inlet in the heart of Alaska's south-central Gulf coast. With a diverse population of close to 300,000, Anchorage is a hub of most cultural, educational, and recreational activities in Alaska. Anchorage offers most of the amenities and cultural activities found in much larger cities (Museum of History and Art, Performing Art Center, Native Heritage Center, music and film festivals, shopping centers [no sales tax!], and several large hospitals) but maintains a rustic feeling.

There are several universities and colleges in the immediate area. Anchorage has many public elementary and secondary schools, as well as private schools and day care facilities. It is central to many recreational opportunities. The city trail system is rated one of the best in the country and it offers a sense of wilderness within the city limits.

There are more than 75 miles of groomed cross-country skiing, hiking, and biking trails (25 miles are lighted) in town. There are also more than 70 ball fields, 5 golf courses, and many small parks, ice rinks and playgrounds.

It is said that "Anchorage is only 10 minutes from Alaska" which is a testament to it being a full fledge city on the edge of vast wildernesses. A multitude of backcountry hikes, rides, skiing, and kayaking await at the edge of town. The city is also home to abundant wildlife. Moose are a common sight anywhere in town. Bears, wolves, Dall sheep, lynx, and beluga whales can be seen in the mountains above town or during a breathtaking drive down Turnagain arm.

For even more information on the Anchorage area check out: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchorage, Alaska](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchorage,_Alaska)

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