PhD/MS Assistantship – Growth and Physiology of Underplanted White Oak

Purdue University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources in West Lafayette, Indiana, is seeking applicants for a Ph.D. or M.S. assistantship in silviculture starting in **August 2021**. This project is being conducted in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry, the Department of the Navy, and the Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center. Field work is at the Naval Surface Warfare Center – Crane Division (NSWC-Crane), on a long-term silviculture trial using expanding group shelterwoods and prescribed fire to regenerate oak and increase structural complexity of Central Hardwood oak forests.

Specifically, the successful candidate will help install and monitor a replicated white oak underplanting experiment placed across a gradient of understory and overstory competition levels. This experiment is designed to identify competitive conditions in which artificial regeneration of white oak can be used successfully to supplement natural white oak regeneration in native forests. This study will allow the student some flexibility in using the project to look at more detailed physiological responses of white oak and/or expand on existing efforts to better understand the fire ecology of oak species, particularly in relationship to conditional mutualisms with mammalian dispersal agents. Additionally, the candidate will assist with overstory data collection at HEE and NWSC-Crane and will help maintain a long-term timber damage study that was installed 2-5 years ago across the two studies.

Department assistantships range from $22,000 - $25,000 per year and include a subsidized insurance plan. The position will be based at Purdue University's West Lafayette campus. The individual should be comfortable with collecting field data in adverse environmental conditions typical of southern Indiana.

Qualifications:

- M.S. or B.S. in Forestry, Fire Ecology or closely-related field
- Minimum GPA of 3.2
- Field work experience, preferably in a research setting
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Possess or quickly obtain a valid driver's license and have a good driving record
- Demonstrated technical and scientific writing (i.e., management plans, reports or manuscripts)

Interested individuals should contact Dr. Mike Saunders before submitting a formal application to Purdue's Graduate School (http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/). Application deadline is **January 15, 2021**.

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