



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



Forest Inventory and Analysis (Coastal Alaska Unit)
Resource Monitoring and Assessment Program
Pacific Northwest Research Station, Anchorage Alaska

Data Collection Crew Leader, Biological Scientist, GS-0401-07/09

See OPM guidelines for wage information:

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

PLEASE REPLY by COB October 14, 2019

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS POSITION send a completed outreach response form and your resume to: Dan Irvine (907-748-2096) or Sarah Ellison (907-227-3963), Coastal Alaska Data Collection Coordinators, at (sm.fs.afsloutreach@usda.gov) using the subject line "PNW-FIA Outreach Response"

The purpose of this outreach notice is to inform prospective applicants of this upcoming opportunity, determine the potential applicant pool, and establish the appropriate recruitment method and area of consideration for the vacancy announcement. ***This outreach may also be used to identify candidates for possible non-competitive reassignment to a position.*** Responses and resumes received from this outreach notice will be relied upon to make these determinations.

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. In Alaska, the inventory is divided into two units, Coastal and Interior. The Coastal Alaska unit spans an expanse of coast line running the entire range of temperate rainforest in southeast and southcentral Alaska, from Ketchikan to Kodiak. Data collection efforts are based upon a live-aboard research vessel and helicopter transport is required to access field sites on a daily basis. After a series of trainings and FIA certification in Anchorage, together lasting approximately 4 weeks in spring, the field season runs from May into September generally consisting of a work schedule including 8-9 days in the field in Coastal Alaska, working 8-15 hours per day, followed by 5-6 days off back in Anchorage. Pre- and post- season work occurs in Anchorage.

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.

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 helicopters. Additionally, employees carry a firearm for bear protection and are subject to a federal background investigation and pre-hire and random drug testing. Firearm training, practice, and certification is an annual mandatory safety requirement for all Alaska field staff. In Alaska's Coastal Unit, employees also conduct an underwater helicopter egress training on an annual basis. Although attempts are made to honor special dietary preferences, accommodations may not be possible in all field operation settings.

Alaska Data Collection Crew Leaders (GS-0401-07/09):

These Permanent Seasonal (PSE) positions may be advertised as 13/13 or 18/8, meaning that a minimum of 13 or 18 two-week pay periods of work are guaranteed per year, about six or eight months, respectively. The guaranteed pay periods of work generally include about 3 months of field work in Alaska, in addition to assisting with pre-field preparation, training, and FIA certification, as well as post-field data processing work at the Anchorage Lab. In addition, Alaska field staff often take field work assignments with FIA crews in California, Oregon, or Washington to fill their guaranteed pay periods. Employees may be offered the opportunity to work longer than their guaranteed appointment depending on workload and funding. These positions are career ladder with the full performance level at a GS-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.

Crew Leaders may be responsible for supervising a small number (1-3) of seasonal employees at the GS-06 level or below. Supervisory responsibilities are not to exceed 25% of the Crew Leader's work load. Crew Leaders will receive training leading to certification as a Helicopter Manager upon completion of task books, training, and appropriate agency approval.

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

This is a pre-announcement only. When the position is advertised, the announcement will be posted on the USA Jobs web site: www.usajobs.gov. The announcement will contain all of the information you need to apply for the position.

To be considered, applicants must be U.S. citizens.

The purpose of this Outreach Notice is to determine the potential applicant pool for this position and to establish an appropriate recruitment method and area of consideration for the vacancy announcement (Region-wide, Service-wide, USDA-wide, Government-wide, and/or DEMO). Responses received from this outreach notice will be relied upon to make these determinations.

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