



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



Forest Inventory and Analysis
Pacific Northwest Research Station

Up to 3 Quality Assurance Inspector(s), 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 December 22, 2023

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED THIS POSITION send a completed outreach response form and your resume to:

Jonny Newman (jonathon.newman@usda.gov) and Vic Anderson (daniel.anderson3@usda.gov) using the subject line "PNWRS QA Outreach Response"

The purpose of this outreach notice is to inform prospective applicants of this upcoming opportunity. *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 POSITION

The U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station (PNWRS) will be advertising to fill one (1) or more permanent seasonal positions as a GS-0401-07/09 Quality Assurance (QA) Inspector. The position is anticipated to work an 22/4 schedule, with 22 pay periods (44 weeks) of full-time work guaranteed and an up to 4 pay period (8 weeks) furlough in non-pay status. Appointees may be offered the opportunity to work longer depending on workload and funding. This position is career ladder with the full performance level at a GS-09. The incumbent may be located at a PNW location in Anchorage, AK, or at a remote duty location within the states of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, or California. Interested candidates should indicate their location preference on the outreach response form.

This position supports the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) project's Alaska data collection efforts. In Alaska, the inventory is divided into two units, Coastal and Interior. The Coastal Alaska unit spans an expanse of coastline running the entire range of temperate rainforest in southeast and southcentral Alaska, from Ketchikan to Kodiak. The Interior Alaska unit spans from the western coastline of Alaska to the Canadian border, and from southcentral Alaska to the North Slope region in the Brooks Range. We anticipate filling up to 3 QA positions, with one supporting the Coastal inventory, one supporting Interior, and one administering support for on-grid contracting efforts in Alaska – this third position will be required to obtain and maintain a contracting officer's representative (COR) certification.

Data collection efforts in the Coastal programs are based upon a live-aboard research vessel or from land-based hubs, and from small communities or remote camps in Interior Alaska. Helicopter transport is required to access field sites on a daily basis. After a series of in-person trainings and FIA certification in Anchorage, together lasting approximately 2-4 weeks in spring, the field season runs from May into September generally consisting of a work schedule including 16 days in the field working 8-15 hours per day, followed by 12 days off. Pre- and post- field season work occurs in Anchorage or at the remote duty location.

The Coastal Alaska Quality Assurance Inspector (QA) reports directly to an Alaska FIA Field Coordinator and during the field season is responsible for training and feedback to crews, field data accuracy, consistency and standardization, and correcting errors in field data collection. **The QA will be expected to support national teams and consistency throughout the year, which requires time management and often prioritizing office-based work over field-based work, even during the field season.** The QA must possess a strong understanding of FIA data collection protocols, and have strong organizational, written and oral communication skills. The QA must be respectful of all crewpersons and keep a positive attitude under sometimes uncertain conditions during the field season. The incumbent(s) will be responsible for organizing and providing up to a month of protocol-related trainings per year, performing daily folder checks of field data during the field season, and for providing crew feedback via field-based QA checks. As needed, these positions are responsible for leading crews of two to four people collecting field data as part of the Alaska FIA Data Collection team.

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. The ability to respectfully work with and train employees from diverse backgrounds is important. In addition, the QA may be responsible for pre-season tasks including photo interpretation of remote sensing data, plot packet creation, map making, and training preparation. Post-season tasks include editing, organization, clean-up and loading of field collected data following the Alaska field season and assisting in writing summary reports and protocol revision. A Resource Helicopter Manager certification will be required to be achieved and maintained for this position. A driver's license is required. This position is a drug testing designated position.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

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.

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.

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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OUTREACH NOTICE RESPONSE FORM
Pacific Northwest Research Station



Biological Scientist (Quality Assurance Inspector) GS-0401 – 07/09

Please submit by COB **Dec 22, 2023**

If you are interested in this position, please complete this form and send it along with a resume to:
Jonny Newman, jonathon.newman@usda.gov, and Vic Anderson, daniel.anderson3@usda.gov

NAME: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

PREFERRED LOCATION FOR THIS POSITION: _____

PREFERRED POSITION (INTERIOR, COASTAL, ALASKA COR): _____

If you are currently employed by the Federal Government:

WHAT AGENCY ARE YOU EMPLOYED BY: _____

TYPE OF APPOINTMENT (Permanent, Term, Temporary, Other): _____

CURRENT SERIES AND GRADE: _____

CURRENT POSITION TITLE: _____

If employed by the Forest Service:

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT REGION/FORREST/DISTRICT/STATION?: _____

If you are not currently a Federal Employee:

CURRENT EMPLOYER: _____

Where did you hear about this vacancy/outreach? : _____

Are you eligible for appointment under any of the following special authorities?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Former Peace Corps | <input type="checkbox"/> | Veteran’s Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Person with Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | Veteran’s Recruitment Act |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pathways Program | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reinstatement Eligibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Veteran with 30% Compensable Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ |