2026 Fire Research Field Assistants (6-9)

Assist with field data collection for Cal Poly Humboldt Wildland Fire Lab research projects

We are looking for 6-9 motivated and curious field assistants to assist Cal Poly Humboldt in partnership on a number of different field research projects this summer: 1) Influence of variable thinning and prescribed burning treatments on surface fuel loading and season fuel moisture dynamics in ponderosa pine forests of northeastern California (based out of Blacks Mountain Experimental Forest near Susanville, CA; 2-3 positions); 2) Characterizing fuels and forest structure of upslope old-growth redwood forests prior to prescribed burning in northwestern California (based out of Arcata, CA; 2 positions); 3) Long-distance dispersal within large high severity fires in California/Oregon and possibly beyond (based out of Arcata, CA; 2 positions), and 4) characterizing the historical spatial structure of a black oak woodland in the Klamath Mountains (based out of Arcata, CA; 2-3 positions).

Assistants should be able to hike short to moderate distances across uneven and steep terrain, tolerate hot/humid weather conditions, and be willing to tent camp for four to eight days at a time, if needed. A rental car (must be 21 or older to drive) or governmental vehicle will be available for work-related travel. The positions based out of Blacks Mountain Experimental Forest will include free bunkhouse accommodations near the field site for all field assistants. We will provide training on data collection methods, though coursework or experience with forest, fuels, and vegetation measurements is strongly preferred.

Salary and Duration

- $18-19 per hour (depending on experience) for ~10-12 weeks (mid-May to mid-August)

Required Qualifications

Strong candidates for the position will have the following:

- Valid driver's license and ability to complete defensive driver training
- Previous coursework or work experience in Forestry, Fire Management, Ecology, or a related field
- Ability to navigate using maps and GPS
- Organized, reliable, and detail-oriented
- Positive attitude and ability to work well with others in remote field sites for extended periods

Preferred Qualifications

- Grade point average of 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale (if applicable)
- Outdoor and camping experience, wilderness first aid or other related training desired
- Experience and knowledge regarding safe driving practices in remote, mountainous areas
- Prior experience identifying woody plant species in n. California
- Prior experience collecting fuels and forest measurements

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, send (as a PDF or Word Document): 1) a resume (including GPA and complete contact information); 2) a brief letter of interest (clearly state position applying for, relevant education, experience, and interest in the position); 3) unofficial transcripts, and 4) the names and contact information of three references in one email to Jeff Kane (jkane@humboldt.edu**)**. Incomplete applications may not be considered. **Review of applications will begin Feb 12th although the application period will be open until positions are filled.**