

Subject: Marshbird field technician - Prairie Pothole Region Minnesota

The Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit is seeking one field technician to join our team for the 2016 spring-summer field season.

The technician will join the graduate researcher in conducting sunrise and sunset secretive marshbird surveys, and conducting habitat assessments. This will be our second season of data collection at study areas throughout the Prairie Pothole region of west-central and northwestern Minnesota.

Our research objective is to examine the effects of invasive wetland plant management on secretive marshbirds. During the first half of the season we will conduct bird surveys using standardized call-broadcast protocol, during early morning hours, and again at late evening. During the second half of the season we will conduct habitat assessments, measuring vegetative characteristics of the wetlands. The study sites are located on public land managed by MN DNR and USFWS.

The best candidate for this position will have experience conducting bird surveys by sight and sound, and be physically fit to walk around in marsh environments. The technician will work both in a team and independently, therefore attention to detail, willingness to follow precise protocol, and good communication are qualities necessary for success. We seek a candidate who possesses an eager and positive attitude for pre-dawn surveys and long field days. Surveys require driving between multiple sites, on poor roads, so our technician should be comfortable with 4-wheel drive vehicles and have a clean driving record.

The field season will begin mid- April and continue through 31 July. There may be opportunity during or after this term to participate in additional trainings, or other field work conducted by the MN Coop Unit. Work is expected to be conducted throughout the week, depending on weather, on a full-time (40 hours per week) basis. Compensation will be \$1800-2100 /month depending on experience. No other benefits are offered. Field vehicles and housing are provided throughout the season. Technician will be an employee of the University of Minnesota.

Interested applicants should send a brief statement of interest, resume or CV, and contact information for 2-3 references to Nina Hill, hillx725 AT umn.com . Review of applications will begin immediately.

Project description: Due to the secretive nature of certain marshbird species, they are difficult to detect, and existing avian survey methods (e.g., Breeding Bird Surveys) do not provide reliable estimates of population size or trends. Recent efforts to develop and standardize survey protocols for secretive marshbirds provide a framework for evaluating responses of this group of birds to vegetation management and for assessing information about their distribution and abundance. The Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have undertaken this project in the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota to assess the response by marshbirds to invasive wetland vegetation management techniques. We use the Standardized North American Marsh Bird Monitoring Protocol to evaluate marshbird use of landscapes managed by prescribed burns, conservation grazing, and herbicide application.