

**Subject:** Funded MS position - sagebrush steppe response to wildfires

SUPERVISOR: Dr. G. Matt Davies

LOCATION: The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: March 21st 2016 START

DATE: September 1st 2016

**Summary of Position:**

I am accepting applications for a Master's student to participate in a project evaluating vegetation dynamics within the sagebrush steppe in eastern Washington. The position is fully funded for two years, includes an annual stipend plus tuition and fees and involves collaboration with researchers at the University of Washington. The successful student will also work with managers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Our research aims to synthesize new and historical data to increase our understanding of how these communities respond to repeated wildfires and post-fire rehabilitation actions. The position will involve several months fieldwork in eastern Washington as well as the opportunity to develop analytical skills relevant to urgent conservation problems. The student will be expected to work closely with research collaborators to produce solid analyses and clear reports with succinct recommendations for land managers. In addition, they will produce compelling scientific articles for publication in peer-reviewed journals. Whilst contributing to the overall success of our Joint Fire Science Program funded study, the student will have freedom to develop their own, relevant research questions. We particularly encourage applications from students interested in:

1. Using plant traits to model long-term ecosystem dynamics
2. Modeling changes in the landscape-scale distribution of species and communities in response to disturbance

We seek a highly motivated individual with strong interests in plant community or fire ecology and strong quantitative skills. The successful applicant will be a member of The Ohio State University's Forest Ecosystem Restoration and Ecology Lab (<http://oardc.osu.edu/ferel>) and the Soil and Plant Community Restoration research program (<http://www.fireregimes.org.uk>). Field work is planned for Spring 2017 in south-central Washington state. The climate of central Washington is semi-arid and can be extremely hot; accessing the field sites will require walking several miles a day in such conditions over rugged terrain.

Standard requirements for entry in the School of Environment and Natural Resources MS Program include:

- Cumulative undergraduate GPA - 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Strong performance on the GRE exam - Verbal score of 156 (66.1 percentile) / 554 (69 percentile), Quantitative score of 158 (69.9 percentile) / 682 (64.7 percentile) with a preferred Analytical score of 4.
- Undergraduate degree in ecology, natural resources management, forestry, biology, or related field.
- Experience/course work in statistical analysis of ecological data
- Field work experience preferably including monitoring vegetation
- Good botanical skills and familiarity with the biological systems, flora, and fauna of the intermountain West a strong advantage.
- Excellent organizational, communication, and presentation skills.
- Ability and willingness to conduct field work in a variety of conditions, including frequent travel, often for extended periods of time, and sometimes in primitive conditions.
- Ability to drive a vehicle on and off road.

Interested applicants should send a CV, transcripts and 1-page letter of interest to [davies.411@osu.edu](mailto:davies.411@osu.edu). Informal enquiries are also welcome.