

**From:** Lora Perkins  
**Subject:** PhD position- Distribution and Ecological Impact of Russian Olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) in the northern Great Plains

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An assistantship (PhD) is available in the Department of Natural Resource Management at South Dakota State University for the examination of the distribution and impact of the invasive tree *Elaeagnus angustifolia* in the northern Great Plains. Although understanding the distribution of this invasive riparian tree is a project requirement, the focus of study on ecological impacts has some flexibility- options include soil nutrients and microbial community, pollinators, birds, and mammals. The student will have the opportunity for spatial modeling, field observations/experiments, and greenhouse/laboratory experiments. The student will be advised by Dr. Lora Perkins with additional mentoring from Dr. Erin Espeland (USDA-ARS).

South Dakota State University is located in Brookings, SD, a town of approximately 20,000 that is about 45 minutes north of Sioux Falls, 4 hours west of Minneapolis, 3 hours south of Fargo, and 3 hours north of Omaha. Year-round outdoor recreational opportunities are abundant.

The successful applicant should have a BS or MS in a relevant field of study, some GIS skills, and interest in biological invasions. To apply please send a cover letter describing yourself and your interest in grad school and this project, GRE scores, and transcripts (unofficial are fine) to [lora.perkins@sdstate.edu](mailto:lora.perkins@sdstate.edu). For full consideration, have your materials in by **December 9, 2016**. Students that are non-traditional or are from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM are encouraged to apply. If you would like more information, please ask!

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