

## Postdoctoral position in Translational Forest Ecology, Policy and Management

**Key Duties:** *Program facilitation/coordination, science communication, outreach and extension in support of California forest management*

### **The Challenge**

The management of broad ecological and societal benefit of forests in California has become a vexing and challenging issue. From increasing fire size, frequency, and intensity to beetle outbreaks and drought-driven mortality, forest composition is changing rapidly. These changes in forest structure create strong feedback into the management of biodiversity, groundwater management, forestry, recreation as well as human safety. Significant investment in research is resulting in emerging ideas about different strategies for increasing forest resilience and the maintenance of the complex suite of values people place on California forests. A limiting constraint on successfully managing forests in this time of change is translating these emerging research findings into management approaches and strategies that managers can implement. Often this entails adapting findings from individual field studies and determining the circumstances, when and where, they would apply to forests being managed for different purposes. Thus, a limiting constraint in taking knowledge to action is the translation of research findings into tools, databases, and other information sources that are available to and resonate with, forest managers. The UC Davis John Muir Institute, the USDA California Climate Hub, and the USGS Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center each has an interest in facilitating this knowledge exchange to improve the management of resilient forest resources in California.

### **Position Summary**

As part of a unique collaboration; The USDA California Climate Hub, USGS Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center and The John Muir Institute of the Environment at the University of California Davis, have an opening for a postdoctoral fellow in translational forest ecology, policy and management. We are seeking an individual who is interested in working at the interface of science, policy and applied forest management via the translation science-based technologies for non-technically trained professionals (resource managers, policy makers, etc.). In this light, the core functions of this position are two-fold: 1. Serve as the program manager (coordination and communication specialist) for the State of California Forest Management Task Forces' Science Advisory Panel where the core functions are around coordination, facilitation and internal and outward communication of science-based translational products; and 2. Conduct stakeholder needs assessments, amass and catalog available science-based resources to enhance decision making capacity for forest management implementation; identify critical information and resource gaps and research needs; and design and develop science-based translational products and support tools that have application for to meet the aforementioned objectives.

The ideal candidate will possess excellent organizational, written and oral communication skills and the ability to work as part of a large interdisciplinary team. The successful candidate will have experience coordinating large groups of scientists and managers, preparing presentations, and other print and media-based products tailored to translate complex scientific knowledge or findings to aid the decision making capacity for managers and policy makers. The applicant should have training and demonstrated experience to integrate a variety of climate, ecosystem, and forest science findings. The successful candidate will work with a diverse team of researchers and administrators at USDA California Climate Hub, USGS-Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center, UC Davis and Berkeley as well as senior managers and policy experts at several State of California agencies (e.g. CNRA, CAL FIRE, CA EPA).

This is a unique position that will give an early career scientist the opportunity to have their voice heard on decisions that will shape forest management and thus the landscape of California for years or generations to come. The successful individual will work directly with a large contingent of California's leading scientists in a wide range of forestry related fields and with political appointees, senior civil servants, lands-managers, local level elected officials and other decision makers. Additionally, this is an opportunity to help translate science into meaningful state-wide policy that could act as a model for other states and perhaps the rest of the nation.

## ***What is Required***

### **Disciplinary expertise**

- PhD in forestry, ecology or plant sciences or closely related field.
- Understanding of forest management, climate impacts to forests, effects of wildlife in California and some appreciation for the diversity of forested ecosystems in the state.
- Familiarity with state, federal, private policy and similar management frameworks and investments such as the CA forest carbon plan, healthy forests program and similar.

### **Communication and Extension**

- Excellent interpersonal skills, strong written and verbal skills, ability of work under pressure with tight deadlines.
- Skill in analyzing information and activities in order to identify gaps between the needs of stakeholders and the availability of current science, tools, and information services.
- Demonstrated experience developing science-based translational products for non-science audiences.

### **Organization and Coordination**

- Demonstrated experience coordinating meetings, group phone calls, workshops, conferences.
- Practical experience in science related program management and or project coordination.
- Ability to facilitate groups of stakeholders, resource managers and scientists around sometimes contentious ecological or environmental topics.

### **Additional Valued Skills**

- Research experience and knowledge in computing, web-based tool and/or code development for forest management applications is a valuable asset.
- Knowledge of information systems, media relations, information packaging and dissemination, and information gathering techniques.
- Skill in working with webpages and other electronics in order to provide information to varying audiences.

## ***To Apply***

Please send (1) a cover letter describing experience, interest in the position, professional/research interests, and general career goals a (2) CV, (3) copies of unofficial transcripts and (4) contact information for 3 professional references (one being your dissertation advisor) in a single PDF. Materials received by Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, will receive full consideration. Send the complete package of materials to: both Drs. Mark Schwartz ([mwschwartz@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mwschwartz@ucdavis.edu)) and Steven Ostoja ([steven.ostoja@usda.gov](mailto:steven.ostoja@usda.gov)) for full consideration.

Salary: Begins at 50,760; (plus benefits) Start date: negotiable – duration of position is 2 years.

Candidates interested in more information on the nature of this position can contact: Steven Ostoja ([steven.ostoja@usda.gov](mailto:steven.ostoja@usda.gov)), Director, USDA California Climate Hub, OR Mark Schwartz UC Davis, ([mwschwartz@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mwschwartz@ucdavis.edu)).

**NOTE:** To be appointed at the Postdoctoral Researcher title, it is necessary to have the PhD in hand. Appointments made without a diploma or certified transcript indicating an earned doctorate are conditional hires and are appointed on an acting basis not to exceed six months. Upon verification of degree the appointment will be extended to its full duration.



Photo: M. Meyer