



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**POSITION TITLE:** Research Technician I

**TERMS:** Part time, hourly position at \$20/hour

**LOCATION:** San Juan Mountains, reporting office Durango, or Silverton, CO

**TIMELINE:** July 2024—May 2025 (approximate, end date negotiable);

- July 1 2024 – approximate start date
- July 2024--August 2024 – full time field work, roughly 8 weeks.
- September 2024—April 2025; part time hourly project support; amount of part-time work and end date contingent on project needs. Pending capacity and need there may be opportunity to extend employment beyond the expected term.

## POSITION SUMMARY

The Research Technician I will work directly with Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) as part of our Water Program team on a variety of field and lab tasks. Full-time field work between July and August will include assisting with a mountain peatland inventory to support mapping efforts of the national PeatRestore project, identify potential restoration needs, and assess changes in peatland condition over time. Part-time work from September 2024 – April 2025 will include assisting with field work and data analysis on a project investigating how wildfire mitigation and forest management activities (thinning, prescribed fire) affects snowpack and water resources, processing and sub-sampling benthic macroinvertebrate (aquatic insect) samples, stream and wetland restoration, and other MSI projects as needed.

## EXPECTATIONS

The Research Technician I will work alongside MSI project and field managers, partners, and volunteers to provide monitoring and field support for several MSI wetland related projects in the summer as well as bi-weekly seasonal snowpack monitoring and benthic macroinvertebrate sample processing in the fall and winter.

Full time work will span early July to late August or early September 2024 and will focus exclusively on fen/wetland inventory and restoration. The Research Technician I will assist with field data collection related to wetland condition monitoring and peatland mapping. The Research Technician I will work across the San Juan Mountains, focused mainly on San Juan National Forest lands. Other tasks the Research Technician I may assist with include data entry and field equipment upkeep.

Part time work from early September 2024 to late April 2025 (end date negotiable) will include bi-weekly field visits to snow monitoring stations, snow stake photo processing, data entry, providing data summaries, processing and sub-sampling benthic macroinvertebrate samples, and using a dissecting scope to sort aquatic insects to order level.



A qualified candidate will have an interest in mountain wetland ecology, snow science, and/or aquatic ecology, a thorough understanding of their own physical/mental/emotional needs in a backcountry setting, and a background in rugged field work. A qualified candidate must be able to thoroughly follow detailed inventory and safety protocols. This position will require long days in variable weather conditions and travel on foot over rough terrain. Overnight camping for three to four nights a week during a majority of the summer field season (July – August 2024) will also be required.

### **SCHEDULE**

40-hour week during July and August transitioning to 15-20 hour week September – April; occasional long days, weekend, or evening work may be required. There may be some weeks during the employment period when work will not be provided (due to adverse weather conditions, etc.). MSI staff will coordinate with the Project Research Technician I regarding these periods if they occur. Field crews will typically work a 4 day on/3 day off work week during the summer field season (July-August). Work during the winter season will consist of full 8-hour field days (including driving time) twice a month in addition to flexible hours assisting in MSI's aquatic ecology lab.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- 1-2 seasons of wetland, ecology, hydrology, or forestry-related field experience
- Vegetation identification course work, fieldwork and/or personal experience
- Ability to follow written and oral instructions, including ability to consistently follow and adhere to detailed field sampling protocols
- Valid driver's license or the ability to obtain a valid driver's license by employment start date
- Willingness to work in a small 2-3 person crew in an isolated setting for multiple days
- Willingness and ability to work long days and unusual schedule in rugged and often remote terrain and adverse weather conditions
- Willingness to camp for 3-4 days a week
- Ability to carry a 30-45lb pack and work at elevations between 9,000 and 13,000 feet
- Ability to hike long distances (>5 miles) as needed to access sampling sites
- Capability to perform field work under winter weather conditions and experience with winter foot travel (snowshoeing, skiing, etc.)
- Valid Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification or the ability to obtain at least a WFA by the employment start date
  - MSI will cover the cost of tuition up to \$280 for a WFA or WFR course
- Experience navigating high clearance 4-wheel drive roads and backcountry travel
- Experience navigating to sampling points within a GPS unit and/or navigation application (eg. Avenza or Gaia)
- Strong attention to detail
- A high school diploma or GED



## **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Wetland vegetation identification coursework and/or field work
- Soil coursework and/or field work
- Experience delineating wetlands
- Experience using a vegetation field identification key
- Familiarity with basic aquatic insect taxonomy
- Experience collecting basic water quality field measurements (e.g., pH, temperature)
- Willingness and ability to work with volunteers and crew members of all age ranges and a spectrum of interests
- Associate's or Bachelor's degree in ecology or related field

Note that experience includes lived experience, traditional knowledge, volunteer experience, school or coursework, work experience, and other related qualifications, skills, and experience.

No candidate will meet every requirement. If you're excited about the position, passionate about wetlands, and/or think you may be a good candidate, we encourage you to apply.

## **TRAINING PROVIDED**

MSI will provide wetland vegetation identification training as well as training surrounding the specific methods used for project work and data management. Wilderness First Aid training will be available on an as-needed basis. MSI and project staff will provide guidance and support throughout the season.

## **COMPENSATION**

Wage range \$18-20/hour (depending on experience); plus a \$125/week stipend for per diem expenses during the 8-week July and August field campaign.

## **BACKGROUND CHECK**

Candidates offered this position will be required to successfully pass a background check prior to their start date.

## **HOUSING**

The Project Research Technician I will be responsible for securing housing. MSI staff can provide some guidance for candidates not already based in the Silverton/Durango area.

## **TO APPLY**

Please submit resume, cover letter, and contact information for three references (including email, telephone number, and relationship to applicant) as a single PDF document to [apply@mountainstudies.org](mailto:apply@mountainstudies.org) with LastName\_FenFieldTechnician as the document title. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning May 15, 2024.



*For further position details, contact Lenka Daskocil at [lenka@mountainstudies.org](mailto:lenka@mountainstudies.org)*

## **ABOUT MOUNTAIN STUDIES INSTITUTE**

MSI is a 501 (c)(3) non-advocacy, mountain education and research center established in 2002 to develop the capacity of southwest Colorado mountain communities to thrive and live sustainably. MSI was created to increase knowledge of our unique mountain environments, deepen our understanding of the issues that affect them, and develop solutions for the benefit of our vibrant mountain communities. We build partnerships to steward natural and cultural values by engaging scientists, citizens, and land managers to innovate solutions through advancing research, promoting education, and developing best practices to put science into action.

## **DIVERSITY MAKES US STRONGER**

MSI aims to build a welcoming, inclusive team that is as diverse as the many mountain communities we serve. We seek a broad range of perspectives and backgrounds to achieve our mission and maintain an environment where all staff are valued and respected.

As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to employment practices that ensure that employees and applicants for employment are provided with equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or any other factor that is not related to the position. This policy applies to all aspects of one's employment, including hiring, transfer, promotion, compensation, benefits, and termination.