

Contact: Dr. Mike R. Saunders, Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources (FNR), Purdue University

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I am seeking two M.S. and/or Ph.D. students for a long-term research project investigating the influence of both prescribed fire and gap-based harvesting to increase ecological resilience in Central Hardwood forests. This work, funded by the Department of Defense and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry, will take advantage of >15 prescribed burns being conducted over the next two years on the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (www.heeforeststudy.org) sites and new study sites at NSWC - Crane, both in southern Indiana.

Positions will be responsible for sampling vegetation and fuel before and after burns, deployment and collection of fire monitoring equipment, entering and proofing inventory data into a geodatabase, producing quarterly reports on activities (1-2 pages), and contributing to annual project reports.

Thesis/dissertation projects can build upon these activities or investigate related topics, including: 1) adaptations of underplanted oak and other hardwood seedlings and saplings to prescribed fire; 2) refinement of fire models to conditions in mesic Central Hardwood forests; 3) long-term impacts of fire intensity on residual tree wood quality in shelterwood regeneration systems; 4) effects of prescribed fire on masting behavior of oak and other hard mast trees; or 5) impacts of fire on habitat structure and use by terrestrial vertebrates.

All candidates must be U.S. citizens due to security restrictions at NSWC - Crane. Work will be on remote field sites and in harsh environments typical of southern Indiana. To meet FNR departmental requirements, candidates must have a B.S. or M.S. degree in forestry, wildlife or a closely related field, a minimum GPA of 3.2 and GRE scores above the 50th percentile on verbal and quantitative sections and above 4.0 on the analytical writing section. Departmental assistantships are awarded at \$18,329 (M.S.) and \$21,020 (Ph.D.) per year, and include a subsidized insurance plan.

Higher caliber candidates with a GPA of at least 3.4 and GRE scores averaging above the 60th percentile should consider applying for the prestigious Fred M. van Eck Graduate Scholarship within the Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center (HTIRC; www.htirg.org<**Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**>) at Purdue. In addition to insurance, awardees receive a higher stipend (numbers currently being finalized), a laptop computer upon arrival and an annual research budget (\$10,000) for either two (M.S.) or three (Ph.D.) years.

Application deadlines for Spring 2015 and Fall 2015 are September 15, 2014 and January 15, 2015, respectively. Interested individuals MUST CONTACT Dr. Mike Saunders prior to submitting materials.

Purdue University is an equal opportunity-affirmative action employer.