Natural Resource Program Academic Internship: Vegetation Ecology

Marin Municipal Water District; Sky Oaks Headquarters, Marin
Part Time, Spring Semester 2017 (with potential for Summer Extension)
Available only to students currently enrolled at COM, SFSU, and CCSF

OVERVIEW

Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) is a public agency that provides and protects the major source of domestic water for Marin residents from its watershed lands that include 18,600 acres in the Mt. Tamalpais Watershed. Besides this primary purpose, the watershed is held in trust as a natural environment of great biological diversity, as scenic open space, and as an area for outdoor recreation. More than 1000 types of plants and 400 kinds of animals, including 80 rare, threatened and endangered species call this land their home.

Caring for nature, managing visitors, and involving the public in watershed stewardship are the central tasks of the rangers, natural resource specialists, and watershed maintenance staff. Volunteers play a critical role in helping us maintain the scenic beauty and biological richness of the watershed. From improving trails, restoring habitat, monitoring plants and animals and protecting threatened species, MMWD has a variety of volunteer opportunities for community members inspired to be ecological stewards.

POSITION

Our watersheds are part of an internationally recognized biodiversity hotspot, just like the Amazon Rainforest! MMWD lands support a startling array of plants; half of all species of plants found in Marin grow here, and 15% of California’s flora - in 0.02% of the area! The natural resources team manages programs to restore habitat, protect rare plants, reduce fire hazards and control invasive plant pests. Come explore parts of the mountain that you’ve never seen before, learn about Mt. Tamalpais’ unique rare plants and improve your botanical skills.

MMWD offers a variety of internship positions that provide experience in vegetation ecology, biological monitoring, youth engagement, and the use of GIS and GPS in conservation and resource management. Though interns will focus on one discipline, MMWD encourages interns to explore other programs in order to get a more comprehensive experience in the world of natural resource management on the Mt. Tam watershed.
DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES
Working with the Vegetation Ecologist, the intern will gain experience in documenting the plant biodiversity of the mountain. Typical assignments would include:

- Learning ecological monitoring methods including data collection, data entry and processing and generating summary reports
- Developing plant identification skills
- Seed collecting
- Following grassland and rare plant mapping protocols as part of a survey team
- Updating rare plant, grassland, and weed distribution maps using GPS cameras and traditional hand-mapping techniques
- Taking, annotating and uploading photographs
- Preparing, scanning and filing herbariums specimens at the California Academy of Sciences
- Writing, testing and editing standard operating procedures and best management practices
- Following instructions from all watershed staff, understanding and respecting all watershed regulations and policies
- Following safety guidelines including responsible use of personal protective gear including a hat, sunblock and sturdy footwear
- Internships may be structured towards a discrete project or assist with ongoing monitoring projects

BENEFITS

- Valuable training through real-world experience by participating directly in problem-solving activities and access to top-notch professionals.
- Opportunities to work with staff and volunteers from diverse backgrounds that share a common interest in preserving and protecting our nation’s natural and cultural resources.
- A uniform will be provided.
- Opportunity for personal/professional development days to pursue an interest, including training and education in various departments within the Park Service, the Parks Conservancy and MMWD.
- Fifty Dollar ($50.00) per day taxable stipend available, plus academic credit.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Ability and desire to work with people of varying backgrounds and ages, different backgrounds, ethnicity, races, genders, sexualities, ages, and viewpoints
- Knowledge of San Francisco Bay region wildlife, ecology, biological monitoring, GIS and GPS or the aptitude to learn
- Experience in working with computers, the Internet, Microsoft Office Programs, and with computer databases
- Ability to follow directions carefully, but also to work independently and take on a leadership role as needed
Creativity and problem-solving skills
Reliable, punctual, resourceful, self-motivated and detail-oriented

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT
Position could take place primarily indoors, outdoors, or a combination of the two. Outdoor tasks are performed in all extremes of weather in hilly terrain. Some assignments may require stamina to perform light physical labor. You may hike in adverse conditions that include extended exposure to sun, wind, rain, uneven terrain, mud, poison oak, and various invertebrates and other animals. Sky Oaks Headquarters is located in Fairfax and is a minimum 40 minute drive from SF or the East Bay. There is no public transportation to this location.

TERMS
Desired Start Date: January 2017
2-3 days per week, January through May typically 8:00 to 3:30. Summer extension possible based on funding, performance, and need
$50.00 daily taxable stipend plus academic credit available
Intern must have a Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to receive stipend
Available only to students currently enrolled in SF State, City College of San Francisco, and College of Marin

To apply for this position, please submit an application and send a resume and a thoughtful cover letter to AcademicIntern@parksconservancy.org. Please indicate the position(s) that you are applying for in your cover letter. No phone calls please.

Marin Municipal Water District, the Parks Conservancy and National Park Service seek to increase diversity in the workplace and reflect our Bay Area community. People of color and of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.